KLOPP ON 20/21 • TSIMIKAS SIGNS • NECO'S NEW DEAL • ALL THE MAJOR TROPHIES • ANDY ROBBO

LIVERPOOL FC





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Official Liverpool FC Monthly Magazine





Attack THE PREM!

NEW SEASON | NEW KIT | NEW GOALS

NOW LET'S DO IT AGAIN!





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TAKUMI TUCKS IT HOME

The penalty shoot-out didn't quite go our way but Liverpool's strong second-half performance in the FA Community Shield at Wembley drew comparisons with last year's curtain-raiser, and there was the added bonus of a first goal for Takumi Minamino. Here he is, coolly placing his shot beyond Arsenal keeper Emiliano Martinez to level the score at 1-1.


Arsenal
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WATCH OUT BOSS!

With so much traffic on the training ground there's bound to be the odd collision or two. Luckily Jürgen Klopp and co manage to navigate around a 'Fabisson' crash.




ERLER
AXA



HARD TARGETS

Prior to the Community Shield, the senior squad enjoyed a training camp in the Alpine town of Saalfelden near Salzburg in Austria where the hills are certainly impressive but the goals, it seems, are a bit on the diddy side.


L.F.C.
Standard Chartered
YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE



Photoshoot:
Bobby Firmino
16/07/2020

THE NATURAL

Five years ago ***Roberto Firmino*** was just starting out on his Liverpool FC career and he quickly became the most photogenic feature star in the magazine

01 SEP 2015



Things change swiftly in football but of the six players signed by Brendan Rodgers for Liverpool in the summer of 2015, three are still at Anfield today: Joe Gomez, James Milner and Roberto Firmino.

The Brazilian was the last to arrive before Rodgers left the club, and he made his debut on the cover of this magazine in August with the headline 'LET'S GO FIRMINO! THRILLING FANS AT A FOOTBALL GROUND NEAR YOU'.

Bobby duly obliged when the photographer asked him to yell at the camera for effect. He was instantly likeable and would soon prove to be a bit of fashionista, but he'd also show he had an appetite for hard work with the sheer footballing class to back it up.

In the following month's issue, in a feature entitled 'THE ENTERTAINER', we got a further glimpse of Firmino's style when he did a spot of Melwood keepy-uppy in his own threads, before revealing: "It's strange but I remember just before I moved to Hoffenheim [from Brazilian club Figueirense in 2011] I had a dream about playing in England.

"At the time it wasn't an option, the opportunity wasn't there for me and I think if I'd come to the Premier League directly from Brazil it would've been a massive change for me.

"Being in Germany has meant it hasn't been such a huge difference. I enjoyed my time there but didn't win anything. That's why I came here – I want to fight for titles and play in the Champions League."

In the April 2016 issue we were talking tattoos, by which time under new manager Jürgen Klopp he was being acclaimed as an artist for his ability to create goals as well as score them.

"Everything on my right arm represents or relates to my mum and dad or my sister," he revealed."The year 2014 [on his right hand] is when my daughter was born. She's the best thing that's happened in my life. When I come home and a game hasn't gone well she always has a smile and a hug for me.

"On the left arm I have a variety of things, no single subject, and on my neck the tattoo means 'God'."

He described that first season, 2015/16, as "crazy football. I knew it was like this when I came here and it was part of the reason why I wanted to move to the Premier League. I really enjoy it."

Klopp was, he declared, "the best manager I've worked with – and I don't say that because he picks me all of the time! It's because of his mentality and his personality. He gives confidence to all of the players with just one or two words."

Halfway through his second campaign Bobby was sporting a top knot as he ball-juggled for the January 2017 issue in green trousers with knee-zips! But if he was flamboyant both on and off the pitch, he was fearless as a footballer too and had been clocked at covering an average of seven miles per game.

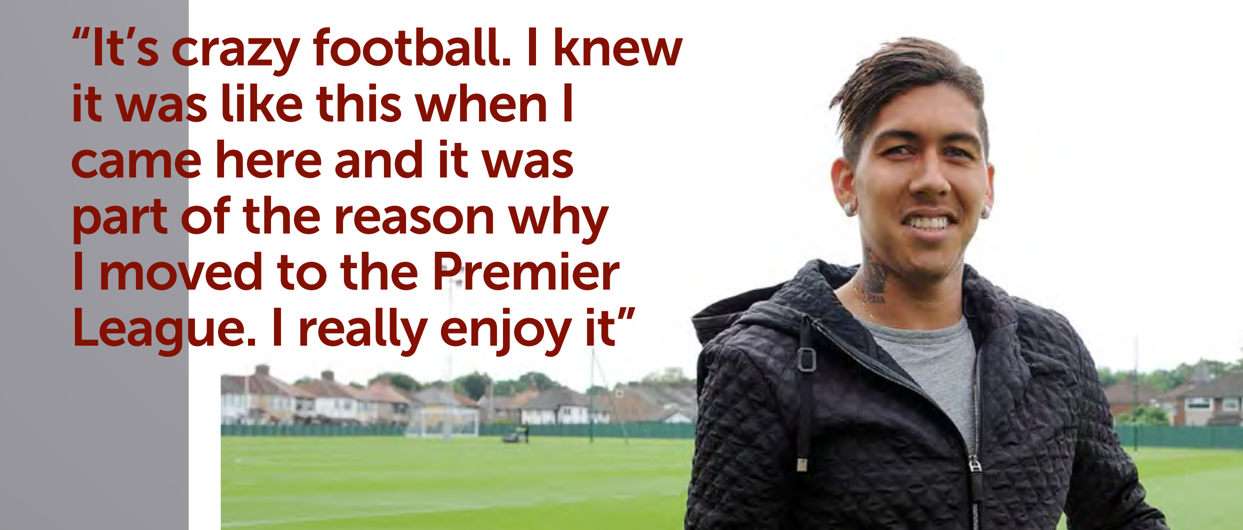
"Sometimes people see you as lean and slender and then they think: he's not a strong player," he told the magazine. "But what







"It's crazy football. I knew it was like this when I came here and it was part of the reason why I moved to the Premier League. I really enjoy it"



02 OCT 2015

03 APR

2016



“Being a professional footballer is not just about determination and talent – you need to apply yourself in all sorts of ways in your life”

matters is what you feel and what you do on the pitch.

“If you think you are strong, you are really strong and I class myself as a strong player. I’m not intimidated by big defenders.”

There was a further insight into his mentality when he added: “Being a professional footballer is not just about determination and talent – you need much more than that. You need to apply yourself in all sorts of ways within your life; have a close relationship with your family, give your best every time you train.

“You need to be happy with your life and happy with yourself to spread that happiness among those people close to you.”

In May that year, sporting diamond earrings for a cover-shoot with the magazine, he’d sum up season 2016/17 like this: “It was a perfect finale, and like a good book there were lots of twists and turns along the way as we fought to the very last page, the game against Middlesbrough at Anfield, to get the right outcome [and qualify for the Champions League].”

This was the season when Bobby came of age for Liverpool in the Premier League, as well earning regular call-ups for Brazil. He scored 11 goals for the Reds: five with his right foot, three with the left and three with his head.

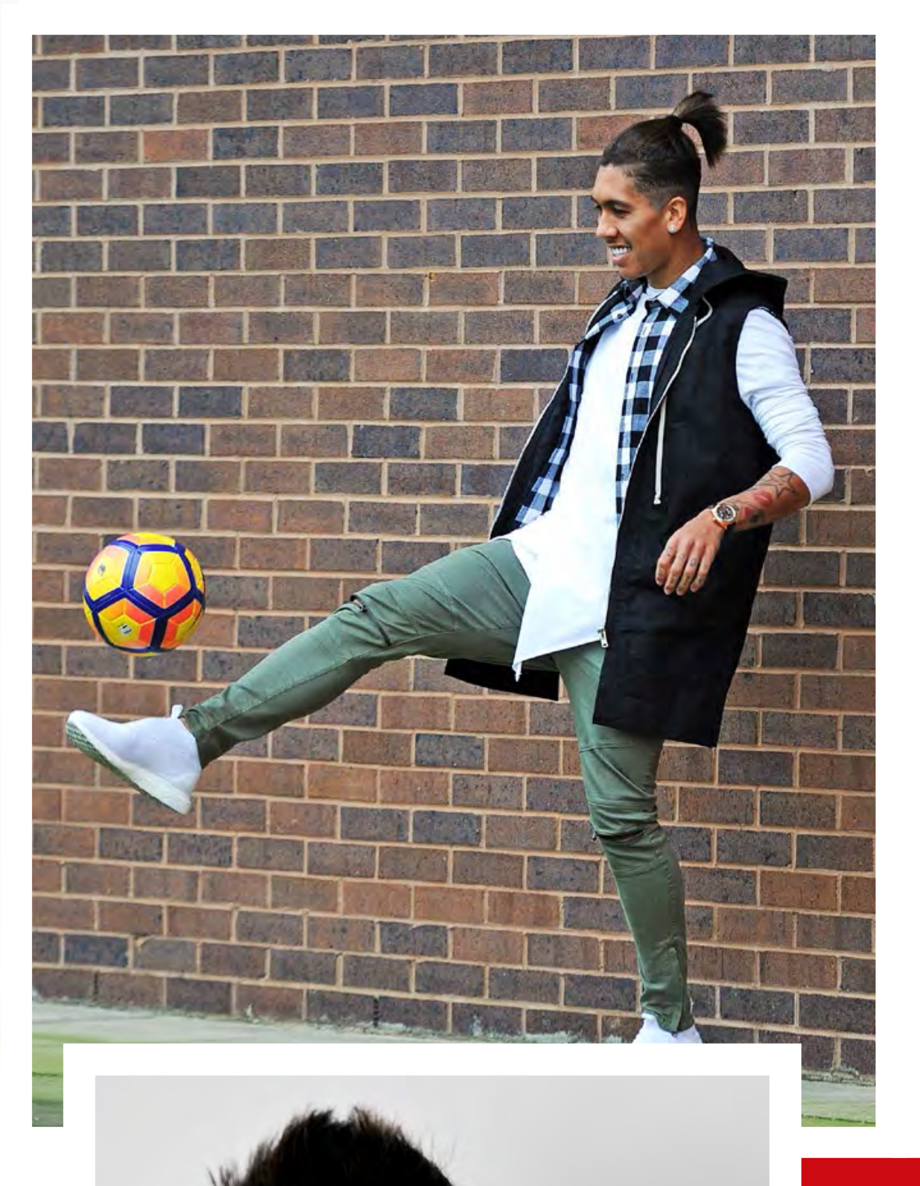
He had 100 shots – only team-mate Philippe Coutinho had more with 106. He provided seven assists – the same as Coutinho, two shy of Georginio Wijnaldum. And he played a less quantifiable but just as crucial role in the well-being of LFC, in terms of selfless application, feel-good skills and smiles.

“A very intelligent footballer,” was the verdict from club legend Steven Gerrard. “He’s on that same wavelength – he sees things. There are players and there are levels, and he’s absolutely top-level.”

Just under a year later he was back on the cover as the magazine celebrated his first 40 goals for Liverpool in all competitions.

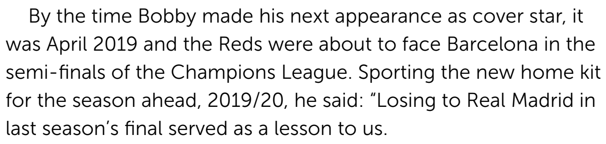
Another former Liverpool great, Jamie Carragher, called him “one of the most underrated players in the Premier League. He’s highly-rated at Liverpool and by Jürgen Klopp but outside Liverpool he’s not mentioned when you talk about the top strikers.

“I would think he’s the first name on the team-sheet. Yes, you’ve got Salah and Mane, but Firmino’s hold-up play and work off the ball makes him one of the best attacking players in the Premier League. Now he’s adding goals to that too. He’s a top player.”









05 MAY
2017

By the time Bobby made his next appearance as cover star, it was April 2019 and the Reds were about to face Barcelona in the semi-finals of the Champions League. Sporting the new home kit for the season ahead, 2019/20, he said: "Losing to Real Madrid in last season's final served as a lesson to us.

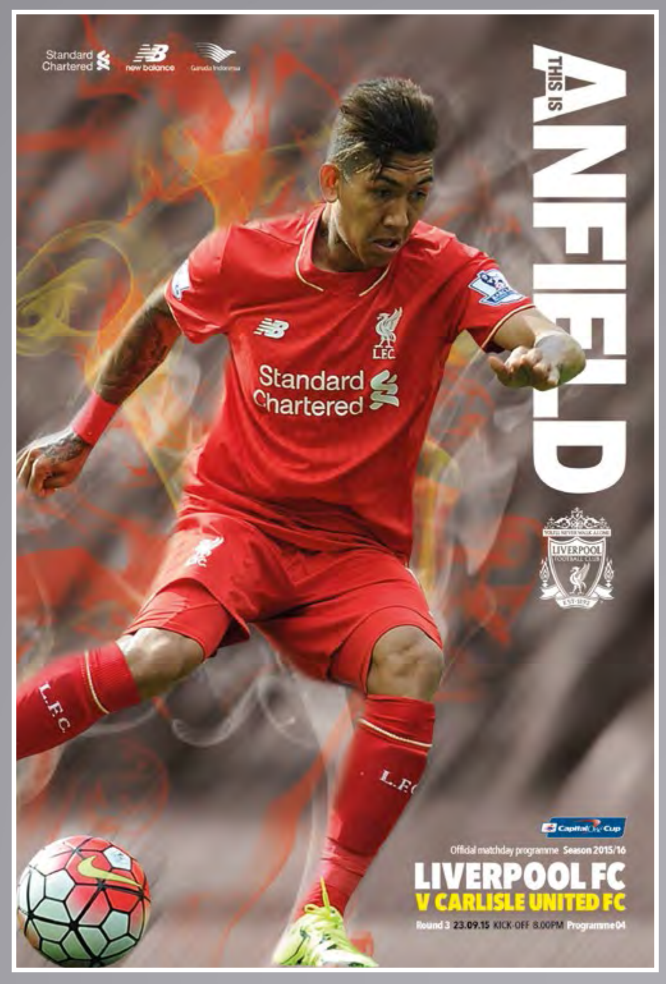
"You always learn from victories but you learn more from defeats. It made us more experienced and mentally stronger to return to the final this season."

So to the Christmas 2019 edition of the magazine, an assessment of the season so far as Liverpool chased down the Premier League title and prepared to face Brazilian club Flamengo in the FIFA Club World Cup, and of his time so far at Anfield.

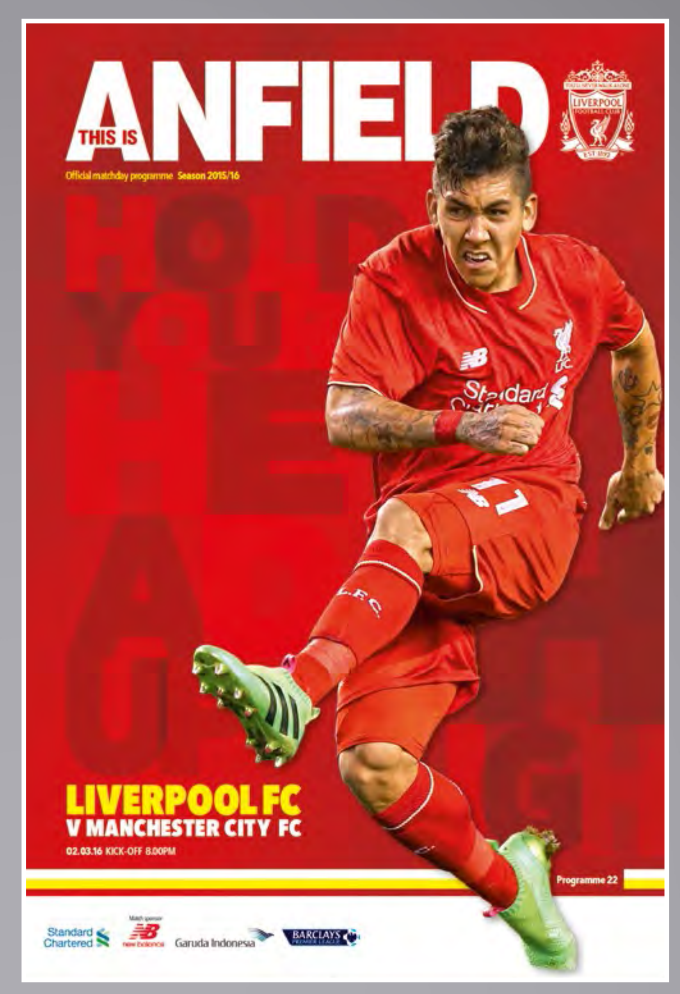
"This team has been growing, mentally especially. It has real persistence, to fight and win matches always and never give up. Regardless of the scoreline, we're always chasing the win. We can do this well now, it's been working.

"Personally I think I have improved in every way, too: physically, tactically, mentally. But I don't want to stop here. I always want more. I want to keep winning titles with this club. That's it."

Spoken like a true professional, delivered with panache.



Matchday Programme: 23.09.2015 Liverpool v Carlisle United



Matchday Programme: 02.03.2016 Liverpool v Manchester City



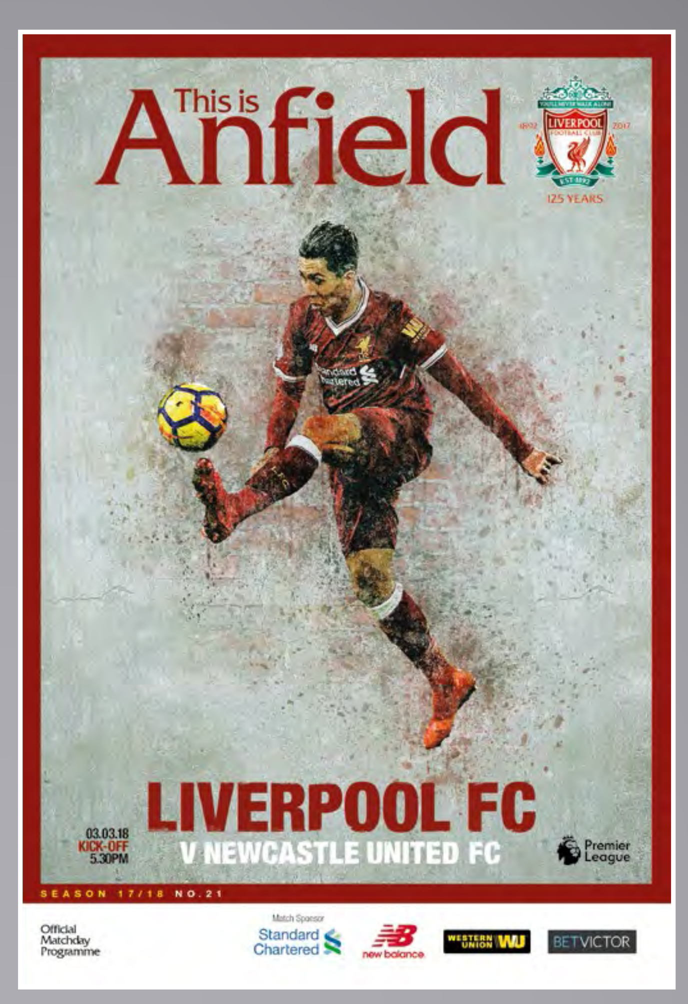
Matchday Programme: 17.10.2016 Liverpool v Manchester United



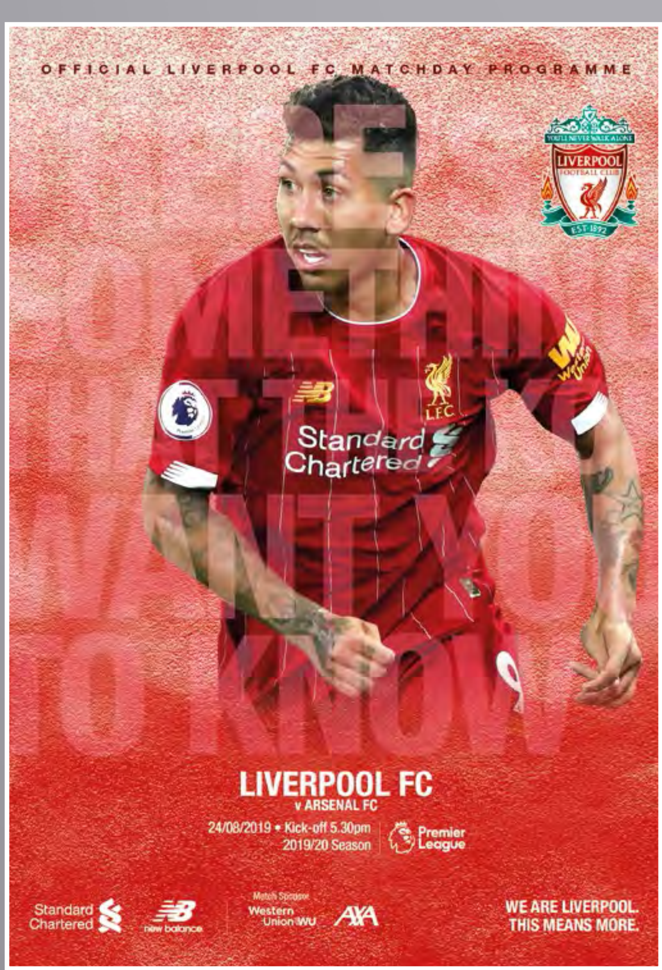
Matchday Programme: 31.01.2017 Liverpool v Chelsea



Matchday Programme: 01.11.2017 Liverpool v NK Maribor



Matchday Programme: 03.03.2018 Liverpool v Newcastle United



Matchday Programme: 24.08.2019 Liverpool v Arsenal

COVER ★ STAR ★

Firmino's first appearance on the cover of the Anfield matchday programme came in September 2015 as Liverpool hosted Carlisle United in a League Cup third-round tie. Later that season he was on the front for the Premier League game against Manchester City in March 2016 and duly scored in a 3-0 win.

In season 2016/17 he was the cover star in October as the Reds and Manchester United played out a goalless draw, and in January when Liverpool and Chelsea drew 1-1.

November 2017 brought a debut appearance on the cover of the large-format UEFA Champions League programme, for a group-stage victory against Maribor, and in March 2018 he was on the front for the visit of Newcastle United (2-0 to the Reds).

At the start of last season it was fitting for Firmino to be on the cover for the game against Arsenal, with eight of his (at the time) 48 goals for Liverpool in the Premier League having come against the Gunners.

On this occasion he didn't find the net as the Reds ran out 3-1 winners, but the *Liverpool Echo* noted that he was "always a threat, as Arsenal know better than most, wowed the crowd with one ridiculous piece of skill, and continued to find pockets with his pass finding Salah for a penalty."


Atta
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ck THE PREM!

Last season was very special – but it's all about 2020/21 now as the Mighty Reds reload for a brand new title challenge

Man of his word

This season Jürgen Klopp's matchday programme notes are sure to be as insightful, inspirational and unmissable as ever

Way back at the start of July, when Liverpool's 2019/20 Premier League triumph had just been confirmed and Jürgen Klopp was already being quizzed about the future, he vowed that the Reds would "not defend the title next season – we'll attack the next one."

It was pure Klopp, the perfect riposte from arguably the world's greatest and certainly its most charismatic manager, and it's why his distinctive matchday programme column is such a massive draw for fans and neutrals alike.

He continued: "I have learned [that] when you think you have reached the pinnacle, you are already on the way down."

Then when the 2020/21 fixtures were revealed he simply smiled and said: "'Interesting' is an interesting description, to be honest!

"For months, for weeks, you have no idea how you will start and it's like: what – Leeds United at home, Chelsea away, Arsenal at home?' It's all difficult. Tough start. Tough, tough start of course.

"But I have to say I don't think Leeds loves that start, I don't think Chelsea wants to play immediately against Liverpool again. Arsenal, oh my God, second away game, it's just not nice. What it shows [is] we should try really again in this season. So that's how it is... We just have to make sure that we are as ready as possible."

Now a new book, published by the LFC matchday programme team, gathers together all of Jürgen's notes from last season's issues, beginning with the opener against Norwich City in August 2019 and ending with the emotional scenes at home to Chelsea in July 2020, plus his reflections on LFC's away games, so fans can re-live a remarkable season through the words of a remarkable manager.

To whet your appetite, here's a little of what he had to say this time last season, more or less, when that first fixture saw Liverpool welcomed the newly-promoted Canaries to Anfield, his remarks sounding so perceptive now.

First he welcomed and congratulated Norwich boss Daniel Farke, his team and his coaching staff. Then he said, simply, "We know our job."

A new football season, he went on, "is always about opportunity. I think this coming one presents the best kind of opportunity for all of us in the LFC fold.

"We know we have the opportunity to be better than we were last season. This I love about football. Regardless of what came before, you know there are new challenges and new memories to make."

How right he was. How little we realised just what a record-breaking journey the Reds were about to embark upon.

Klopp added that "this team, since I have been fortunate enough to lead them, has been all about progression collectively and individually. They know standing still means you actually fall backwards...

"I hear the words often, after a season like we just had, about how difficult or how important it is to 'go again'. I don't dislike the sentiment and there is merit to it, but simply 'going again' won't be enough. We need to be even stronger, even fitter, smarter, more committed, greater focus. Maybe a slight change on the sentiment. 'Improve again'. Maybe 'progress again'.



Here is what I know for certain: it will be the toughest, most challenging season we will all face, and that is because of the quality we compete with."

Nobody, though, could have foreseen just how challenging it would be off the pitch, or have imagined the context in which Liverpool would finally clinch the Premier League title.

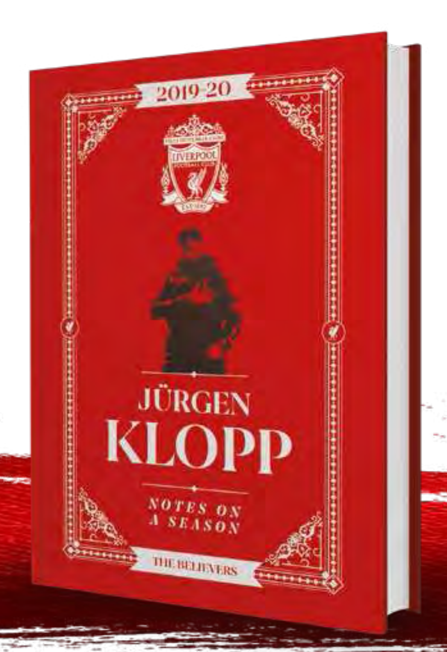
This is how the manager signed off those Norwich notes...

"There is so much in the outside world that is not to enjoy at the moment, so much that is divisive. Football at its best is the antidote to this, albeit we know it can only often be brief respite.

"If I had one message for the coming season, to everyone who cares about this amazing club, it is that we are ready for some great times if we are prepared to work together to achieve it. We can stay together at all times if we want it this way, good times and bad."

Jürgen Klopp: Notes on a Season is available to order now from reachsportshop.com.







Attack THE PREM!

ARE YOU READY FOR 2020/21?

The nuts and bolts and nitty gritty, from big fixtures to new rules as the reigning champions put the Premier League title back in their sights

The first round of Premier League games for season 2020/21 takes place on the second weekend of September; the last round is scheduled for Sunday 23 May 2021. There will be two midweek programmes: one will be played across the weeks commencing 11 and 18 January, and the second on Wednesday 12 May.

The 2020/21 campaign will begin behind-closed-doors, with the Premier League agreeing with its UK broadcast partners to increase the number of matches shown live from 200 to 220 for this season only. Of the additional live fixtures, 12 will be shown on Sky Sports, six on BT Sport and two on Amazon Prime Video.

This is the third successive season in which the Reds have begun their campaign at home, with Leeds United the opponents on Saturday 12 September. Last year it was Norwich City at Anfield, and in 2018/19 the Reds hosted West Ham United. In total Liverpool have begun at home eleven times in the Premier League era, with 17 away opening fixtures.

To date Jürgen Klopp has managed four Matchweek 1 fixtures with Liverpool, seeing his team score 15 goals – the highest by any side in that period and an average of 3.75 per match. Counting back, it was 4-1 v Norwich (home), 4-0 v West Ham (home), 3-3 v Watford (away) and 4-3 v Arsenal (away). Boom.

Because of the truncated 2020/21 season, the Premier League has accommodated a 30-day break for those clubs involved in the latter stages of UEFA's 2019/20 competitions, so neither Manchester side features on the opening weekend. City's fixture at home against Aston Villa and United's trip to Burnley have been postponed.

LFC's website revealed that the players were limbering up for training at their Austrian pre-season base when the fixtures were announced. Goalkeeper Adrian says: "Everyone was getting ready before training but checking their phones to see! It was a good feeling. We now know all the fixtures from the beginning until the end, all the tough periods and Christmas as well. Last season was wonderful and historical, but now we're going to be in the present and we face a big challenge in front of us. The ambition, the desire, the intensity and the pace of everyone in training is unreal, so we are going to try to go for everything."

Do you still look for the derby dates first? The Goodison game is scheduled for Saturday 17 October with the Anfield return on Saturday 20 February (all fixtures subject to change). The first game between Liverpool and Manchester City is at the Etihad on Saturday 7 November, with Everton hosting Manchester United that same weekend. Both fixtures are set to be reversed for Saturday 6 February. The first Liverpool-Manchester United match is Saturday 16 January with the Old Trafford encounter on Saturday 1 May.

February is looking like the Premier League's blockbuster month, with these showdowns all scheduled: Spurs v Chelsea (3 Feb); Liverpool v Man City (6 Feb); Leicester v Liverpool and Man City v Spurs (both 13 Feb); Arsenal v Man City and Liverpool v Everton (both 20 Feb); Chelsea v Man Utd and Leicester v Arsenal (both 27 Feb).

The summer transfer-window closes on Monday 5 October. An additional domestic window will be open until 5pm BST on Friday 16 October with Premier League clubs only able to trade with EFL sides – for loans or permanent transfers – and not fellow top-flight teams.

On 3 August clubs voted 13-7 in favour of reverting back to a maximum of seven players named as substitutes with only three used. At the time of writing this was subject to a second vote at a Premier League meeting. During Project Restart clubs had been permitted to name nine subs and introduce a maximum of five into the action.

Early last month the Premier League announced that clubs had "approved the implementation of VAR, in line with the full FIFA protocol." It comes after the world governing body took on control for overseeing the video assistant referee system from the International Football Association Board, the sport's lawmakers. Part of the change will see an increase in referees using the pitchside monitors for goals, red cards and penalty-kicks.

Here's the fine print on that last bit, regarding spot-kicks. If a goalkeeper's foot is over the line when he saves a penalty then VAR will advise it is retaken, although this will not be the case if a spot-kick hits the post or goes over…unless the goalkeeper has a "material impact" on the kick being missed. Moreover, players who encroach in the area when a penalty is taken – and have a "material impact" on the outcome – will be judged by any part of their body that is on the ground when the kick is taken.





Leading by example

The shrewdness and sincerity of the Reds captain and FWA footballer of the year comes across in his own regular column

In the daytime hours before Liverpool played Chelsea on 22 July and were subsequently presented the Premier League trophy, Jordan Henderson spoke to BBC Sport's Sally Nugent about what the moment would mean to him.

Towards the end of the interview, when asked whether he'd lift the trophy aloft and spare a thought for those who never thought he'd do it, he was typically equitable but did admit: "As a footballer you'll always get criticised and it's about using it in the right way. I feel as though I've learned to use it as a motivation and as extra energy. So in a way that's helped me in my career."

Jordan, who turned 30 the previous week, recalled the feeling nine years earlier when he'd joined the Reds from Sunderland.

"At a club like Liverpool the expectation is so high, it's such a huge club. I was just turned 21 and it was definitely more difficult when I was younger and learning.

"But the only way you learn how to cope with it is through experience. Having gone through different experiences, people telling me I'm not good enough or not big enough or not fast enough, whatever it may be, as you get older you just learn to use it in a much better way.

"Now I look for it, if anything. I look for the criticism because it gives me that extra motivation to prove people wrong."

Henderson tends not to talk too much about himself, which is why his matchday programme notes instead reflect an impressive knowledge about the game plus a genuine appreciation of the sacrifices made by those who watch from the stands, home and away, whatever the cost.

When Liverpool welcomed West Ham United in the Premier League on Monday 24 February, the skipper began by reflecting on the previous week's defeat at Atletico Madrid in the Champions League last-16 first leg. Built into the "team culture" was an "ability to respond in a positive way to setbacks [and] we wouldn't want it any other way."

He went on: "Speaking of challenges, a number of the lads have asked me to reference in the programme the support we got away to Norwich and Madrid. It won't have escaped anyone's notice that the weather in England in past weeks has meant travel for day-to-day life has been difficult.

"Getting to and from Norwich was far from straightforward for us as a team and we have the luxury of having all our needs catered for us, and some of the best people in the business sorting our travel.

"The away ends at Norwich and Madrid were full and the backing we got was so loud and supportive. It wasn't lost on us players that a lot of those in the away end probably had no guarantees on knowing how their journeys home would be affected.

"It's moments like this when you realise how privileged we are to have the following we do. People travelling at all times, by different means, at great expense – and it's never straightforward.

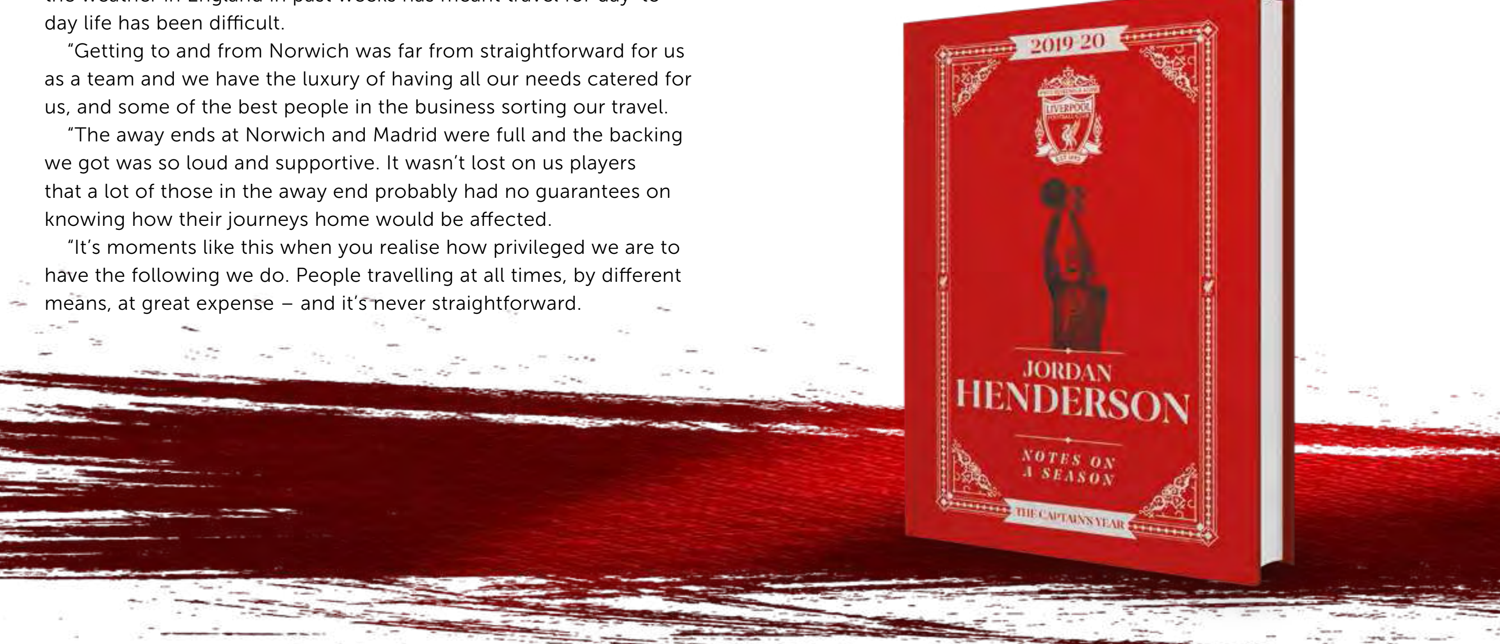


"It's very humbling when you stop and think the reason they do it is to support our team...

"It doesn't take a series of storms to bring home the sacrifices fans make for their teams. But after Norwich, in particular, and around the Madrid game, it did highlight that no matter how challenging it is for players in these periods, it's a tiny fraction of the issues supporters deal with.

"So, on behalf of the Liverpool players, we massively appreciate it and we never take it for granted."

Jordan Henderson: Notes on a Season is available to order now from reachsportshop.com.




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FAB DIMENSION

Is it any coincidence that the avalanche of recent honours for the Reds coincided with the arrival of Fabinho? The Brazilian, who turns 27 in October, is embarking on his third season as a Liverpool player, and it was assistant-manager Pep Lijnders who best summed up his role in the midfield: "Inside the 'organised chaos' that we want, that we like, he is a lighthouse. He controls it. You can still have the style of the gaffer and how we want to identify ourselves, but with a player like Fabinho in the middle, the ball always goes 'out round'. That's how they say it in Portuguese. His timing, his vision, his calmness, it gives another dimension to our midfield play."



MILNER'S FOCUS

Since 2009, only Manchester City have managed to retain the Premier League title after winning it. Vice-captain James Milner, who won titles with the Cityzens in 2012 and 2014, knows how tricky following up can be, but says this LFC team are hungry to be champions again.

"Teams in the past have shown how difficult it is to retain that league title. That'll be a big challenge. You earned that right to be called champions but then you have to go and prove it and do it again. I think everybody is focused and ready to go again and hopefully have a real good run at retaining it."

Attack THE PREM!

ALI ATTACKS

Psychology is a huge part of football and when Jürgen Klopp said Liverpool "will not defend the title next season, we'll attack the next one," he was determined to put his team on the front foot. It is a message his players have heard loud and clear according to goalkeeper Alisson. "One hundred per cent I agree with him. It was the way we won the title – by attacking it. If you want to defend it, we have to attack it again. We will prepare for that, we will be on our toes when we are back in action. The great feeling from winning things gives you the desire to win again, everything. We've won the Champions League and we will go for that again; we've won the Premier League and we will go for that again."





VIRGIL'S BIG HOPE

Virgil van Dijk is expecting another demanding season and one thing he hopes to see soon is fans back at Anfield. "It's going to be a very difficult year, a very tough year full of games that we all want to play, but it's going to be tough. We have to manage ourselves well, be very professional and dedicate a lot towards the season, get your rest, eat well, sleep well and hopefully the fans can contribute with that and hopefully we'll see them back in the stadium soon as well. It will definitely boost every one of us."



TRENT'S A WINNER

He recently added Premier League young player of the year 2019/20 to his list of honours and Trent Alexander-Arnold has been speaking about his will to win. "I'd say I'm chill, quite laid-back. But when you step onto the pitch there's something that clicks and it's just that competitive nature that's in every athlete really. That desire to win at any cost. You'll find yourself after training, driving home and you won't even realise the things you've done or said. It's just a competitive edge all the time. And if you can get into the habit of that, and I think a lot of amazing things come through habits, then that's just how you feel every day. You just want to win."

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Tom Green, Reading



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JOE READY TO GO

With a shortened pre-season following a 2019/20 campaign that lasted for a full 12 months, nobody yet knows how fitness levels will be impacted during the new season. Mentally, though, Joe Gomez insists that the Reds are ready to go. "Obviously it was a short break and then we had the restart and then the period when we switched off for a couple of weeks and that was that. But I think more than anything, the gaffer instils in us that it's a mental battle more than physical half the time, so we'll be ready and we have a squad full of quality to rotate when needs be. The main thing is, mentally we are ready to go. And I think everyone is hungrier than ever."

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CALENDAR KINGS

With last season's Premier League extending into June and July, we now have the first two Liverpool players to score league goals in every calendar month of the year



SEPTEMBER

Sadio's five September goals include one on the day Anfield's expanded Main Stand was officially opened, in a 4-1 defeat of Leicester City.

Mo has four, with one in a 1-1 draw with Burnley in 2017 (left) marking the club's 125th anniversary.

Mane 5 goals against: Leicester (H) 2016; Hull (H) 2016; Leicester (A) 2018; two v Newcastle (H) 2019.

Salah 4 goals against: Burnley (H) 2017; Leicester (A) 2017; Southampton (H) 2018; Newcastle (H) 2019.

OCTOBER

Both forwards have fired four for the Reds during October, the duo combining to devastating effect for one of the two which Sadio scored against Cardiff at Anfield in 2018.

Mo also scored in that game, but the best of his October crop is his winner at Huddersfield in 2018 – his 50th goal in English football. He was picked out by Shaqiri's pass and scored with a trademark finish.

Mane 4 goals against: WBA (H) 2016; two v Cardiff (H) 2018; Leicester (H) 2019.

Salah 4 goals against: Spurs (A) 2017; Huddersfield (A) 2018; Cardiff (H) 2018; Tottenham (H) 2019.

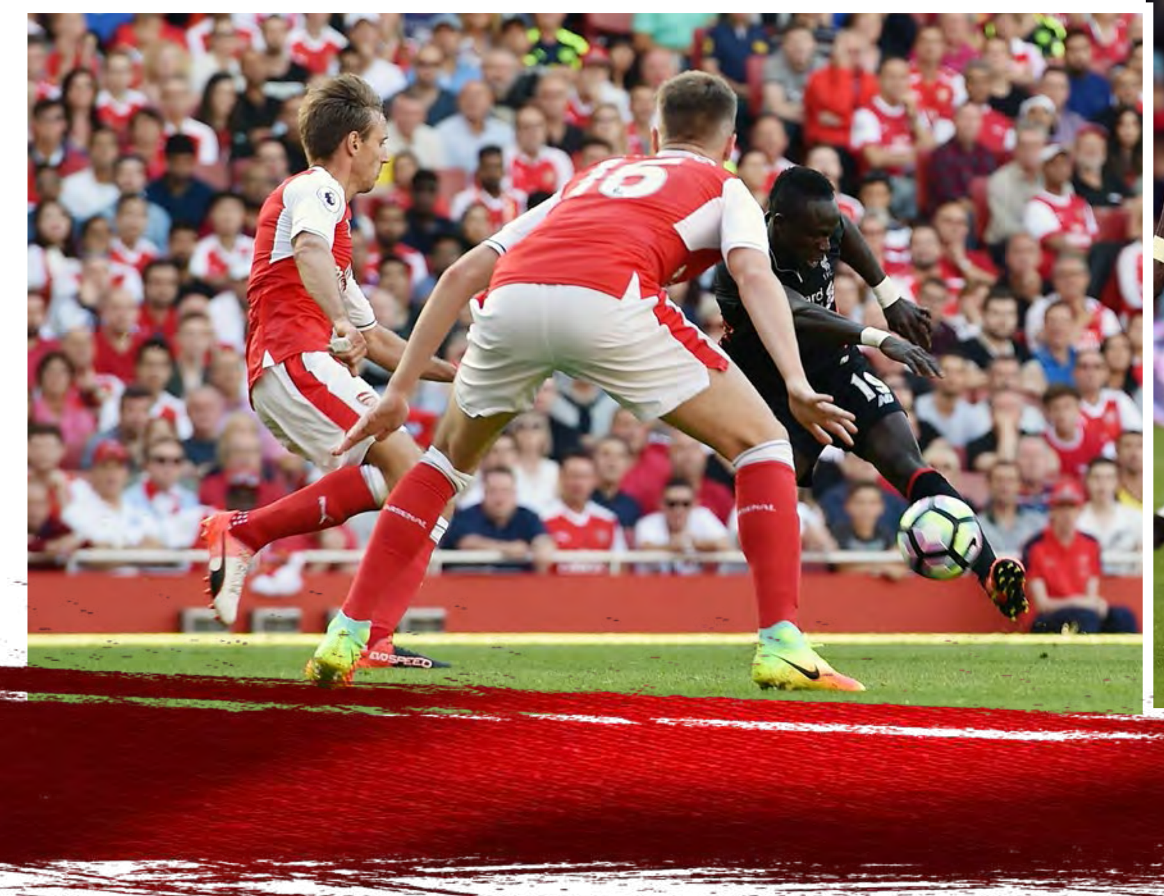
AUGUST

Mo Salah has scored on the opening day in each of his each of his three LFC seasons and has netted seven Premier League goals during the traditional first month of the campaign, with three against Arsenal at Anfield including 2017's seventy-yard dash to score his first goal in front of the Kop.

Strike-partner Sadio Mane has nine and calls his debut strike in the 4-3 win at Arsenal in August 2016 (right) as "my favourite – it was a great goal!"

Mane 9 goals against: Arsenal (A) 2016; Watford (A) 2017; two v West Ham (H) 2018; Crystal Palace (A) 2018; Southampton (A) 2019; Burnley (A) 2019.

Salah 7 goals against: Watford (A) 2017; Arsenal (H) 2017; West Ham (H) 2018; Brighton (H) 2018; Norwich (H) 2019; two v Arsenal (H) 2019.







NOVEMBER

The dynamic duo have shared 16 goals in the eleventh month of the calendar year. Few have been more important than Sadio's glancing header deep into stoppage-time at Aston Villa last season (below) that earned all three crucial points, after he'd set up team-mate Andy Robertson for the equaliser.

For the pick of the Egyptian's Mo-vember goals, we're going for a brilliant back-post volley in a 3-0 win at Stoke City in 2017 – a goal created by Sadio's run to the by-line and delicate chip to pick out his team-mate. Few team goals come better than Salah's Terry Mac-esque header against Manchester City last season too.

Mane 6 goals against: two v Watford (H) 2016; Stoke (A) 2017; Aston Villa (A) 2019; Man City (H) 2019; Crystal Palace (A) 2019.
Salah 10 goals against: two v West Ham (A) 2017; two v Southampton (H) 2017; Chelsea (H) 2017; two v Stoke (A) 2017; Fulham (H) 2018; Watford (A) 2018; Man City (H) 2019.

DECEMBER

The deadly duo have 20 festive goals between them, and it's strikes against neighbours Everton that get the nod. Mo's first Merseyside derby goal was a brilliant curling effort at the Anfield Road end in the snow of 2017 (above).

Twelve months earlier in his own derby debut Sadio netted an injury-time winner at Goodison to give Kopites the perfect present.
Mane 6 goals against: Bournemouth (A) 2016; Everton (A) 2016; Man United (H) 2018; Arsenal (H) 2018; Everton (H) 2019; Wolves (H) 2019.
Salah 14 goals against: Everton (H) 2017; Bournemouth (A) 2017; Arsenal (A) 2017; two v Leicester (H) 2017; three v Bournemouth (A) 2018; Wolves (A) 2018; Newcastle (H) 2018; Arsenal (H) 2018; Bournemouth (A) 2019; two v Watford (H) 2019.

Attack THE PREM!

JANUARY

The year's opening month has seen Mane and Salah share 14 goals in a Liverpool shirt and both scored in the 4-3 Anfield thriller with Manchester City in 2018. Back then Sadio took Mo's pass and crashed a ferocious left-footed drive into the top corner (below), and a few minutes later Salah sensationally lobbed the City goalie from 35 yards.

Mane 6 goals against: Sunderland (A) 2017; Burnley (A) 2018; Man City (H) 2018; Crystal Palace (H) 2019; Leicester (H) 2019; Sheffield United (H) 2020.

Salah 8 goals against: Man City (H) 2018; Huddersfield (A) 2018; Brighton (A) 2019; two v Crystal Palace (H) 2019; Sheffield United (H) 2020; Man United (H) 2020; West Ham (A) 2020.





MARCH

The first of Sadio's seven LFC goals in March came against Arsenal in 2017 and was a lesson in clinical finishing: one touch inside the area then a venomous drive across Gunners keeper Petr Cech (above).

Six of Mo's seven March strikes came in his debut season, with four on a memorable day against Watford. For his first and third goals he dragged the Hornets defenders this way and that before slotting home composed finishes.

Mane 7 goals against: Arsenal (H) 2017; Newcastle (H) 2018; Crystal Palace (A) 2018; Burnley (H) 2019; Fulham (A) 2019; Bournemouth (H) 2020.

Salah 7 goals against: Newcastle (H) 2018; four v Watford (H) 2018; Crystal Palace (A) 2018; Bournemouth (H) 2020.

FEBRUARY

A veritable goal-fest with nine for Sadio and eight for Mo. The duo have certainly earned their spurs against Tottenham at Anfield. In 2017 it was Sadio who struck twice in as many first-half minutes versus the North Londoners.

The following year Mo scored twice in a dramatic 2-2 draw, his second in injury-time (below) voted LFC's goal of the decade for the 2010s in an online poll. *The Guardian* reported: "From a throw-in on the right he somehow wriggled clear of Dele Alli, Ben Davies and Jan Vertonghen before prodding over Hugo Lloris from close-range."

Mane 9 goals against: two v Tottenham (H) 2017; West Ham (H) 2018; West Ham (A) 2019; Bournemouth (H) 2019; two v Watford (H) 2019; Norwich (A) 2020; West Ham (H) 2020.

Salah 8 goals against: two v Tottenham (H) 2018; Southampton (A) 2018; West Ham (H) 2018; Bournemouth (H) 2019; two v Southampton (H) 2020; West Ham (H) 2020.





APRIL

The 2018/19 home game against Huddersfield saw both score twice in a 5-0 victory. Sadio bagged his brace with his head and could've had a hat-trick of headers but for the woodwork.

Both were also on target in a 2-0 win over Chelsea in 2019 and Mo's goal will be remembered for a long time, cutting inside before blasting a long-range strike (above) past Kepa Arrizabalaga and into the top corner of the Kop net...before celebrating with a yoga pose!

Mane 5 goals against: Everton (H) 2017; Bournemouth (H) 2018; Chelsea (H) 2019; two v Huddersfield (H) 2019.

Salah 6 goals against: Bournemouth (H) 2018; West Brom (A) 2018; Southampton (A) 2019; Chelsea (H) 2019; two v Huddersfield (H) 2019.

CALENDAR KINGS



MAY

In the 2018/19 season Mo kept Liverpool's title challenge on track in the penultimate fixture at Newcastle United, scoring with a cushioned right-footed volley from an Alexander-Arnold cross. Sadio then scored twice on the final day as Liverpool beat Wolves 2-0, both close-range finishes from Trent crosses (above).
Mane 2 goals against: Wolves (H) 2019.
Salah 2 goals against: Brighton (H) 2018; Newcastle (A) 2019.

JUNE

Both scored behind-closed-doors in last season's 4-0 win over Crystal Palace. Mo made it 2-0 just before half-time (below) after a run in behind the Palace left-back. Sadio raced away to seal victory after brilliant approach-play by Bobby Firmino and Mo.
Mane 1 goal against: Crystal Palace (H) 2020.
Salah 1 goal against: Crystal Palace (H) 2020.



JULY

Sadio scored the goal that broke the deadlock against Aston Villa, crashing a shot in off the bar following a fine pass from Naby Keita. Then came a neat conversion at Arsenal from Andy Robertson's low cross, and a brilliant curler to seal the 3-1 win at Newcastle (left).

Mo found the net twice at Brighton, sweeping in Keita's pass then wrapping up victory with a near-post header from Robbo's corner.
Mane 3 goals against: Aston Villa (H) 2020; Arsenal (A) 2020; Newcastle (A) 2020.
Salah 2 goals against: Brighton (A) 2020.

Attack THE PREM!


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RIGHT BACK AT YA

To an Alpine backdrop in Austria, the hills were alive to the sound of **Neco Williams** talking about his new contract, with the club website asking the questions...

NECO, CONGRATULATIONS ON SIGNING A NEW LONG-TERM CONTRACT WITH THE CLUB – HOW DOES IT FEEL?

It feels amazing. At the minute for me, there is no better place to learn and to become a better player than being here and working with the lads.

We've got some of the best players in the world and we're one of the best teams in the world, so I think personally, especially learning from Trent and Robbo every day – getting their advice, seeing what they say – it's only going to make me a better player.

I feel it. I take it day-by-day and I am maturing in my game and I am developing as a player.

IT'S BEEN A CRAZY FEW MONTHS FOR YOU, SO WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE THIS REWARD?

Last season was my 'breakout' season, but I think the more games I play now, the more I train, I feel I am becoming a better player.

As I say, learning from Trent and Robbo has helped me massively. In training I am learning from what they are doing, they are giving me advice on what to do attacking-wise and defensively. There is no better place to be at the moment.

IT WAS AN EASY DECISION TO SIGN, THEN...

Yeah, I'd say so. My aim at the moment is to try to close the gap between me and Trent and give the boss a decision to think about and give him a bit of a headache, but I know I have got a long way to go.

I am only 19, I am learning and my aim is to keep working hard, to stay humble and hopefully this season I will keep getting the game-time. That will only make me a better player.

NINE MONTHS AGO YOU'D YET TO PLAY FOR THE FIRST-TEAM AND NOW YOU'RE SITTING HERE WITH A NEW DEAL AND A PREMIER LEAGUE WINNER'S MEDAL...

It has changed but I am still the lad I was two years ago, I am still exactly the same person. I am still humble and I know where I come from.

I just think I've got to keep working hard, doing what I have been doing, and hopefully then I will have a good career. I've still got a long, long way to go. There are still a lot of things I need to improve on in my game, but being here, there is no better place to learn these things – that's both football-wise and also out-of-football.

WHERE DID YOU WATCH THE 2019 CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINAL, AND DID YOU EVER THINK THAT A YEAR LATER YOU'D HAVE A PREMIER LEAGUE WINNER'S MEDAL AROUND YOUR NECK?

I was on tour with the Under-23s and we all sat together watching the game. I was just thinking to myself, seeing what Trent has done and him being in the Academy, going all the way and playing in that game...it was a big eye-opener for all the Academy players to prove that anything is possible with hard work, dedication and being humble.

Watching that game, I was thinking to myself that there is a chance it could be me in a few years. At the minute, I think I am going in the right direction and I am just looking to the future.

YOU COULDN'T HAVE HAD A BETTER START, BREAKING THROUGH IN THE SEASON THE CLUB WON THE TITLE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 30 YEARS...

There is no better way to make my breakout season in the season we had. At 19, to have a Premier League winner's medal is a surreal moment for me, my family and my friends. But hopefully in the future I will have more silverware, we'll keep winning trophies and I'll keep getting medals.

If the lads stay like we have been in the last few seasons, nothing is going to change and we're heading in the right direction. There are a lot of things we need to improve on as a team, but each day, with the manager we've got, there is no one better to learn from than him. If we keep doing what we're doing, we'll keep getting the silverware and winning trophies.



THE MANAGER HAS SAID THAT WHEN YOU FIRST WENT UP TO MELWOOD YOU WERE 'A MACHINE' IN TRAINING…

Well, most sessions I do at Melwood, I am up against Sadio. Because in the teams we do, we have the 'starting' team and the 'other' team, and mostly every session when we have games back-to-back – a game always around the corner – I'm always up against Sadio.

So every session, it is difficult for me because I am up against one of the best wingers in the world, so I think that has definitely improved me as a player. I don't think there is any other way of becoming a better player than coming up against the best in the world.

HOW HAVE YOU FOUND THE STEP UP TO PREMIER LEAGUE FOOTBALL – HAS ANYTHING SURPRISED YOU?

I would say yes. I would say the intensity is much, much harder. The game is faster, but that stuff you need to adapt to when you're going to Premier League football from Under-23s football.

You get fans, big crowds, and that's a bit more pressure on you. Obviously with the virus and no fans in the stadiums, I haven't really experienced most of that yet. I am just grateful and thankful to the boss for trusting me and I will prove to him that I am a trustworthy player. I'll keep working hard and keep pushing.

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT HAVING CURTIS JONES AND HARVEY ELLIOTT AROUND THE FIRST-TEAM SQUAD AS WELL?

We're quite close, that's definitely helped us three a lot. We've been together and trying to push each other to the limits. Obviously we're young lads, we're learning and if we keep going and keep working hard then hopefully we'll get the game-time and we'll have great careers.

I've known Curtis since I was little, about seven or eight. So for us to go through the Academy stages and get into the senior squad, it's just an indescribable moment for us.

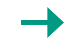
For Harvey – what an unbelievable talent. At 17 to come into this squad and to do what he does is just unbelievable.

HOW IMPORTANT ARE ALL THE STAFF AT THE ACADEMY IN YOUR JOURNEY SO FAR?

Massive. I wouldn't be here without them and it's not just one or two coaches who get you there, it's the whole Academy – from all the staff I've worked with, the physios, the nutrition people. Every single one of them have helped us get to where we are now.

I'm thankful for what they've done for us. Like I said, without them, I wouldn't be here today.





WE'RE YOUNG LADS AND WE'VE BEEN LEARNING TOGETHER, TRYING TO PUSH EACH OTHER TO THE LIMITS. IF WE KEEP WORKING HARD, HOPEFULLY WE'LL GET THE GAME-TIME

I used to work with Rob Jones a lot because he used to be a full-back like me. After mostly every session, I stayed behind for five to ten minutes to just work on my crossing with him. That was massive for me and helped me loads.

All the staff there have been texting, congratulating me and telling me to keep working hard and keep going. But I think when I do go back to the Academy I'll have a good talk with them all, especially Alex Inglethorpe because he's helped me massively as well.

HOW HELPFUL AND IMPORTANT IS VITOR MATOS IN BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN THE ACADEMY AND THE FIRST-TEAM?

One of the first sessions I had up in Melwood was a few weeks into Vitor's arrival here. He helped me massively, 100 per cent, because he was the one who was looking after me, who got me to Melwood and he was the one who trusted me at the very start.

I WOULDN'T BE HERE WITHOUT THE STAFF AT THE ACADEMY – EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THEM HAS HELPED AND THEY'VE BEEN TELLING ME TO KEEP GOING

THE STORY SO FAR

Neco has been with Liverpool for more than a decade despite the fact he is still a teenager!

A converted attacking midfielder, his speedy rise through the Academy ranks included being part of the 2018/19 FA Youth Cup-winning squad. He was successful from the spot as Liverpool beat Manchester City in the final's penalty shoot-out.

He made 11 first-team appearances last season, including half-a-dozen in the Premier League. His senior debut had come in October against Arsenal in the League Cup fourth-round tie at Anfield, and Williams supplied the late assist at the Kop end for Divock Origi to make it 5-5 on the night.

The Wrexham-born defender was also part of the Reds squad that lifted the FIFA Club World Cup in Qatar in December 2019.



With us young lads, he's always there, always texting us, asking do we need anything. He's massive in my game and this team.

WHAT'S IT LIKE FOR A YOUNG LAD LIKE YOURSELF WHEN YOU LOOK AROUND THE DRESSING-ROOM AND SEE THESE SENIOR PROFESSIONALS?

When you sit down in the changing rooms and you look around, you just want to be like them and you look up to them because they're the ones who have had fantastic careers, they're the ones who are the best in the world at the minute.

For us young lads, you watch what they do and you try to learn things off them and try to be like them. They're still role-models to us.

WHAT'S IT LIKE COMING AWAY ON THIS PRE-SEASON TOUR WITH THE FIRST TEAM?

This is my first pre-season tour and it's amazing. Pre-season is obviously hard work but that's what we need to get us ready for the season. With double-sessions mostly every day, that's what's going to get our fitness up and that's definitely going to help us for the season coming ahead.

REGARDING THE NEW CONTRACT, WHAT KIND OF MESSAGES HAVE YOUR FAMILY BEEN SENDING?

They're just thankful for who I'm thankful for – all the Academy staff, the manager and all the people around Melwood. I've come a long way to where I am now and to sign a long-term contract is just an unbelievable feeling.

When I think back from when I was six, my dad's been bringing me in every day. For him to see me sign a long-term contract and to be with the senior squad and to keep improving is just an unbelievable feeling for him, as it is for me.

JÜRGEN ON NECO

"It's great news for him, great news for us. I think Neco is – how young players are – they are kind of 'projects'. I don't want to use that word, but with my English I don't have a better one. There is a lot of work to do, but there is already a lot of skills and potential there and that makes it so exciting.

"From the first day he trained with us, he trained like a machine. Every day he became better and better and better and I thought: okay, what's that? Unfortunately then, in the moment he started playing for us, I saw it – he got a little physical knock, like it was always really intense all of the time. But then he had to play.

"The last game of the season against Newcastle is a really good example – first half, struggled slightly, [but] second half he was there. That's exactly him in the moment and there is so much positivity about this kid that I am really happy we have him here. That's very important for me because he is our boy and it is the perfect place for him because we don't rush his career.

"We want to prepare him for his career, yes, and in his position in which he will probably play, there is a really, really good player in that position. But Trent cannot – and should not and never did – play 500 games a season, so we need to have options there. Neco is as close as possible for his age-group.

"He has a lot of things that we like, so I am really, really happy that he signed this contract."





WORKING FROM HOME

Autumn brings the new football season and a breeze in the air, but Melwood was looking mighty fine in the summer sunshine this year



Lockdown gave Liverpool FC's club photographers a chance to take pictures of both Anfield and Melwood like they'd never quite done before.

Back in May they used a drone to capture the stadium from above on a bright summer's day (as featured in a previous issue) then flew it further east for some spectacular aerial shots of the training-ground. With the club's ultimate vision to bring its first team and Academy football training facilities together on a new, state-of-the-art site in Kirkby, it was chance to record the present for posterity.

When the 2019/20 season restarted it was clear the players relished their return to Melwood. They'd missed everything about it – the physical environment and particularly the people, as captain Jordan Henderson made clear when he described the historic training base as "our home from a work perspective."

He continued: "On behalf of all the players I want to take this chance to tell [the staff] that they mean everything to us. I think I have the best workplace in the country and the rest of the players say the same thing.

"Each day we are looked after by world-class professionals who create a culture and environment where players can thrive. Whether it's the coaches, the medical team, fitness staff, the nutrition experts and chefs, the ground staff, the administration people or security... they dedicate their careers to make our team the best it can be."

Team-mate Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain also provided an insight into Melwood's special atmosphere and what he called "the different sides to training.

"There's the joking-around side, like when you're out with your mates as a kid having a kick-around. But obviously there are also the serious drills when you've got to be focused on shape, doing a hard running session or some sort of five-a-side.

"But in-between that you have moments after training where you have shooting competitions, or moments before training when you're doing keepy-up competitions and juggling the ball.

"Even doing 'rondos' when you're trying to nutmeg each other – they're the moments when you have a laugh and there are jokes that last the season."

In a world of so much uncertainty just now, Melwood has remained a constant, reassuring presence. One thing that has changed in recent months, though, has been its famous 'Champions Wall' – updated no less than four times to reflect the Champions League success of 2019, followed by a fourth UEFA Super Cup, the subsequent FIFA Club World Cup, and of course the Premier League title triumph.

Eventually this emphatic list of major honours will find a new home in Kirkby, as Melwood's ambience and energy is transferred to an exciting new home. But it's still the people that count, as manager Jürgen Klopp has made clear...

"Every person who walks through the gates of Melwood makes our environment the place it is. They all contribute. And not 'big or small' – only big, only important, only critical.

"They do the 'hard lifting' in the shadows and allow the team and people like myself to enjoy the sunshine when times are good. But we know their value and they are as worthy of the title 'Champions' as anyone I can think of."





MEET KOSTAS

Left-back Kostas Tsimikas became the Reds' first summer signing when the club confirmed his transfer from Olympiacos on 10 August, and here's what he then told LFC TV...

JOINING LIVERPOOL FOOTBALL CLUB

I'm very happy, I'm very proud to be here. For me, it's the biggest club in the world. It's an honour to be here and I will give my best to play for this team.

I play left-back and I give everything in every minute for the team. My brother is a Liverpool fan and he pushed me to come here and sign! As a kid, I supported Liverpool. For all my family and for my brother, we are very happy for this.

I think until now he [my brother] doesn't believe I'm here! Now when he sees the pictures he will understand I've signed here and will be very happy.

LAST SEASON WITH OLYMPIACOS

Last year we played very good, we were a family. It was the best year for me [playing 46 games including Champions League fixtures and helping Olympiacos to the league title] and after that year, I sign here and this is the best present for me.

Now I'm here, a new challenge and I'm ready to give everything.

ENGLISH FOOTBALL

Last season helped me a lot because we played in the Champions League and I played also against English teams.

The league here, I like a lot. I watch it on the TV and it was always one dream I had from when I was a kid to come to play in this league and to come through.

JÜRGEN KLOPP

I'm very excited because for me, he is one of the best coaches in the world. I am very excited that he would choose me to be one of the left-backs of the team.

With a lot of work and focus on what I do and what the coach wants, and every day working hard in training, I believe I can be on the highest level.

I know [Andy] Robertson is one of the best left-backs in the world but this gives me extra motivation to work hard.



REDS SUPPORTERS

I hope to play on this pitch at Anfield first of all [and] after I hope to feel how the fans sing the songs. I think I am ready for this and I hope this happens soon.

THE NUMBER 21 SHIRT

I like it as a number. I took it in Holland when I played there [with Willem II] then the next year in Olympiacos. I wore it for two years and now here.

AMBITIONS WITH LIVERPOOL

To achieve [our] goals. To win the league again and also to win the Champions League.



"I REALLY LIKE HIS MENTALITY"

Jürgen Klopp reveals: "We have watched Kostas for a long time and are really happy that he has joined us. It's the perfect news before we came back together very soon.

"He is a very good footballer with an attitude to win and to compete, and I really like his mentality. It fits perfectly with the mood and the desire we have in our dressing-room already.

"He has showed already at a young age he can experience football in a different country and do well – and he has been a big part of the success Olympiacos has had to win their title this season and in their European campaigns.

"Kostas knows from personal experience what is required to challenge and succeed domestically and in the Champions League, and he is ambitious for more – just like us. He has come up against some very tough opponents in the past couple of seasons and done well and we know he relishes the challenge, which is perfect for us.

"For that reason we are delighted to know we'll have him with us for the years ahead. I'm so pleased."

FIRST THERE WAS SOTO

Kostas is the second Greek international to represent the Reds. The first was central defender Sotirios Kyrgiakos, brought here by Rafael Benitez in August 2009 following Sami Hyypia's move to Bayer Leverkusen and injuries at the time to Daniel Agger and Martin Skrtel.

'Soto' played 49 times in two seasons and scored three Premier League goals, against Stoke City (away) Blackpool (home) and Blackburn Rovers (home).

Manager Benitez said: "What has Sotirios brought? Headers. He is strong and he likes the challenge. It is something that we needed and right now he is doing well."

Kyrgiakos went on to have brief spells at VfL Wolfsburg, Sunderland (on loan) and Sydney Olympic before retiring in 2014.



TSIMIKAS TIMELINE

1996: born in Thessalonica, Greece's second-largest city; grows up in village of Lefkonas.

2010: joins AS Neapoli Thessaloniki at the age of 14.

2013: plays for Panserraikos and scores five goals in the Gamma Ethniki, the fourth tier of Greek football.

2015/16: moves to Piraeus to join one of Greece's biggest clubs, Olympiacos; makes his Super League debut against AEL Kalloni on 19 December.

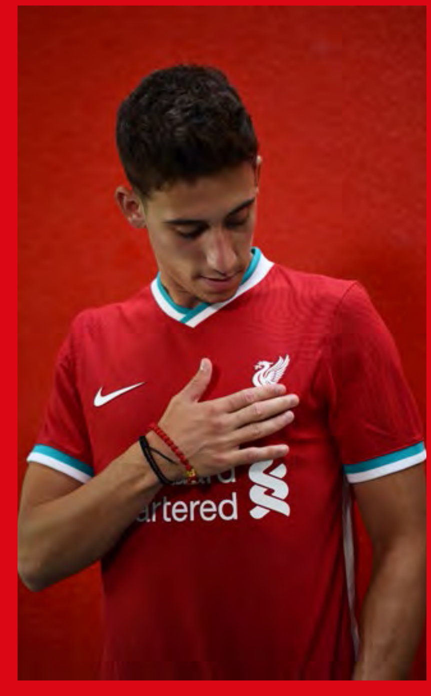
2016/17: loaned to Danish club Esbjerg; scores on his debut in 3-0 home win over SonderjyskE Fodbold.

2017/18: another loan switch, this time to the Netherlands and Willem II; starts 32 of their 34 Eredivisie matches; a spectacular bicycle-kick against Utrecht is voted Voetbal International Magazine's goal of the month and he's named Eredivisie 'rookie of the month' for March 2018; on LFC's radar as they check on progress of on-loan Pedro Chirivella at Willem II.

2018/19: returns to Olympiacos manager and helps them to a 1-1 draw at Burnley in a Europa League qualifier; makes his senior international debut for Greece for the 2018/19 UEFA Nations League matches against Hungary and Finland.

2020/21: four days after appearing in the Europa League round-of-16 second leg at Wolves, unveiled as a Liverpool FC player at Melwood.







THE 48

That's the number of major trophies won by Liverpool throughout the club's illustrious history, and here's the breakdown


CHAMPIONS 2019/20
CHAMPIONS 2019/20





19

LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

For the first 18, it was an altogether different trophy and what Bill Shankly famously referred to as "our bread and butter." Today it stands side-by-side with the silhouette of the modern Premier League trophy on Anfield's updated 'Wall of Champions'.

Pre-Shanks, the Reds had won the domestic top-flight title five times, the same as Everton and Manchester United but one behind Sunderland and Aston Villa and two behind Arsenal who'd won the most with seven championships.

By the end of the Sixties there were four clubs tied on seven: Liverpool and the Gunners, Everton and United.

Season 1975/76 saw the Reds crowned as champions and leading the field with nine. There followed another nine LFC titles in the next 14 years.

Nine – just let that sink in.

On the eve of the inception of the Premier League, in the summer of 1992, this was how the title table looked: Liverpool with 18 wins, then Arsenal with ten, Everton on nine and Aston Villa and Manchester United on seven apiece.

United, under Alex Ferguson, eventually matched LFC's total in 2008/09 then added two more. They remain one ahead of the Reds. The only other club in double-figures is Arsenal on 13, thanks to three titles between 1998 and 2004. Then it's Everton on nine, Villa on seven, and six each for Manchester City, Chelsea and Sunderland (whose last was in 1935/36).

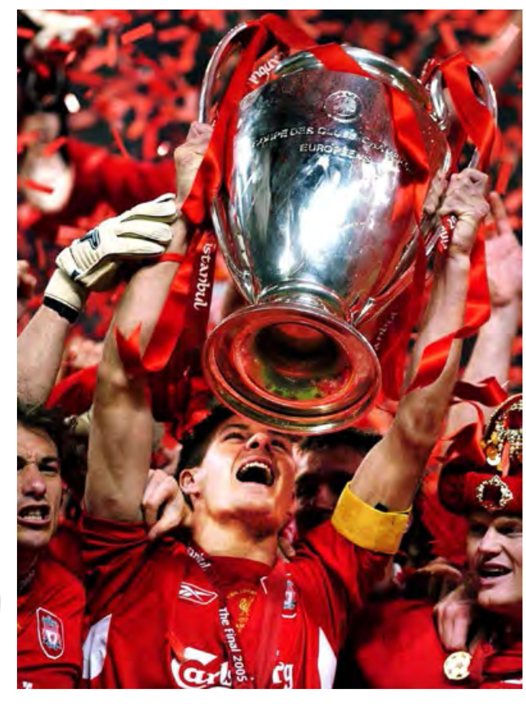
Title wins: 1900/01, 1905/06, 1921/22, 1922/23, 1946/47, 1963/64, 1965/66, 1972/73, 1975/76, 1976/77, 1978/79, 1979/80, 1981/82, 1982/83, 1983/84, 1985/86, 1987/88, 1989/90, 2019/20.











6 

EUROPEAN CUP/CHAMPIONS LEAGUE WINNERS

Which kind of fan are you: the one who insists that it's all about the league titles, or the one of those who puts Euro glory above everything else? Either way, what a privilege to have both to choose from.

Cast your minds back to May 1977. When the Reds became the third British club to lift the European Cup, as it was originally known, on that balmy Roman night, there was a long, long way to go to become one of the true kings of Continental football. Then, as now, one club led the way: Real Madrid with six wins, five of them in the competition's first five years (1956-60).

Benfica and Inter Milan had both won it twice, but the first half of the Seventies had belonged to Johan Cruyff's Ajax then Franz Beckenbauer's Bayern Munich with a treble of consecutive wins each. Liverpool never quite managed three-on-the-bounce, but four times in eight years – between 1977 and 1984 – was no mean feat. Sensational, in fact.

The Heysel disaster brought an end to LFC's involvement in European football for six years, and it wasn't until 2001/02 that the Reds returned to the top table and what had become the UEFA Champions League. At that point they were joint-third with Bayern in the all-time table with four triumphs each, with only Real (eight) and AC Milan (five) above them.

That's still the case today: Real have 13, Milan seven, Liverpool and Bayern six each (following the latter's recent victory over PSG), and Barcelona five.

Those special nights in Istanbul (2005) and Madrid (2019) meant the Reds had won the trophy twice as many times as any other English team.

EC/UCL wins: 1976/77, 1977/78, 1980/81, 1983/84, 2004/05, 2018/19.



1 

FIFA CLUB WORLD CUP WINNERS

You always want to win whatever cup you're playing for, but the Liverpool teams that previously competed in what was called the Intercontinental Cup, back in 1981 and 1984, would probably concede that it wasn't top of their silver-lined priorities.

That all changed in 2005 when the Reds dominated the final against Sao Paulo in Yokohama, had three goals disallowed, two strong penalty-appeals waved away and hit the woodwork twice before going down 1-0.

In December 2019 of course it was fourth time lucky, although fortune had nothing to do with it. The sheer quality of the winning goal in extra-time against old foes Flamengo – the defence-splitting pass from Henderson to Mane, the spin inside to find Firmino, the drag-back and little dinked finish – said everything about Liverpool's class, not to mention stamina.

From this country, only the Reds and Manchester United have ever been world club champions. Real Madrid, surprise surprise, are the most successful European club with seven wins, followed by AC Milan with four, then Bayern, Inter and Barcelona all with three.

Four South America clubs have three each: Boca Juniors (Argentina), Nacional and Penarol (both Uruguay) and Sao Paulo (Brazil).

FCWC wins: 2019.





4 

UEFA SUPER CUP WINNERS

Ah, the Super Cup. If it's not your team competing, it doesn't count apparently – it's just a Continental version of the Community Shield. Yeah right. Never mind the fact that you've got to have won either the previous season's Champions League or Europa League to play for it.

SV Hamburg, who lost to LFC in 1977, Bayern Munich likewise in 2001, CSKA Moscow in 2005, and Chelsea in 2020, will all admit they were desperate to win it.

Four-time winners Liverpool too, when they were edged out by Anderlecht in a foggy two-legged final in 1978 and Juventus in a one-off encounter in snowbound Turin in 1984.

Six wins would've put the Reds top of the all-time table, above Barcelona and Milan, both on five. But let's not be greedy.

SC wins: 1977/78, 2001/02, 2005/06, 2019/20.



3

UEFA CUP WINNERS

This competition holds a special place in the hearts of more mature Liverpudlians, being the first European trophy that the Reds won back in 1972/73.

That triumph belonged to Bill Shankly – his first and only Continental silverware.

Successor Bob Paisley repeated the feat three years later, again as a double with the domestic league title.

Then came the pulsating 2000/01 final when Liverpool beat Alaves of Spain 5-4 in extra-time with a 'golden goal' own-goal. At the time it put the Reds level with Inter and Juventus as the teams with the most success in the competition.

In the Europa League era, Sevilla have since surpassed all three and now stand on six victories, including one against Liverpool in the 2016 final.

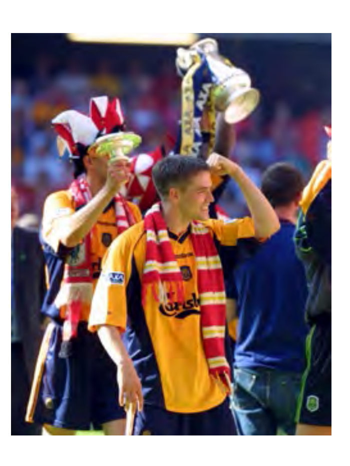
Among the other English clubs to have won the trophy are Tottenham and Chelsea, both twice, plus Manchester United and Ipswich Town, once each.

UEFAC wins: 1972/73, 1975/76, 2000/01.





7



FA CUP WINNERS

Of all the domestic trophies, the FA Cup is the one that Liverpool fans are arguably least in love with. But let's quickly qualify that statement: back in 1965 it meant more than anything, as the scenes when the Reds brought the cup home to the city for the first time clearly testify. Every supporter over 60-ish will tell you that, and every player who appeared in the final against Leeds United will agree.

Each of Liverpool's seven final wins has had its share of drama: the joy of that first triumph; the scintillating display against Newcastle in 1974; the emotional Merseyside derbies of 1986 and 1989; the Michael Thomas wondergoal against Sunderland in 1992 (okay, not the best game ever); Michael Owen's 2001 double against Arsenal in the Cardiff heat; and Steven Gerrard's thumping game-savers against West Ham in 2006.

Despite Liverpool's seeming ambivalence about the competition, only four clubs have won the FA Cup more times: Arsenal (14), Manchester United (12), Chelsea and Tottenham (both eight).

FAC wins: 1964/65, 1973/74, 1985/86, 1988/89, 1991/92, 2000/01, 2005/06.





8

LEAGUE CUP WINNERS

Twelve appearances in the final, eight wins. Not bad considering that Liverpool never took the tournament seriously until the late Seventies.

The following decade brought four wins, against West Ham, Tottenham, Manchester United and Everton respectively.

In 1995 it was Bolton who were beaten in a Wembley final remembered for Steve McManaman's goalscoring man-of-the-match performance. Then in Wales the Reds were victorious against Birmingham City (on penalties) in 2001 and Manchester United (under the closed roof) in 2003.

The 2012 shootout success over Cardiff City was the fourth time the Reds have faced a lower-league team in the final tie.

LC wins: 1980/81, 1981/82, 1982/83, 1983/84, 1994/95, 2000/01, 2002/03, 2011/12.





YOU WANT **RECORDS?** YOU GOT 'EM!

A reminder of the incredible records the Reds set or matched during their relentless march to the Premier League title last season – all 28 of them!

- Liverpool achieved the longest run of successive home league victories (24), breaking their own English record of 21.
- Jürgen Klopp's men recorded the best-ever start to a season by any team in Europe's top five leagues – 26 wins and a draw from their first 27 games, taking 79 points out of 81 on offer.
- They reached 30 league wins faster than any team in English top-flight history, in just 34 games, beating Manchester City's 35.
- During the course of a 38-game spell the Reds accrued more points than any other team in Premier League history – 104.
- Liverpool clinched the title in just 31 games and broke the English top-flight record by winning it with seven fixtures to spare, bettering the five set by Manchester United (twice), Everton and Manchester City.
- They equalled the Premier League record for most points accumulated at home in a season – 55 – with 18 wins and one draw. Chelsea (2005/06), Manchester United (2010/11) and Manchester City (2011/12) are the others to have set the mark.
- The Reds equalled an English record for the top two divisions of 32 league wins in a season, set by Manchester City in 2017/18 and 2018/19, and Tottenham Hotspur in the old Division Two in 1919/20.
- By recording those 32 wins they also set a club record, beating the 30 games won in 1978/79 (over 42 games) and 2018/19 (over 38 games).
- They are now the first team in history to win the title in an eighth different decade, beating Arsenal, Everton and Manchester United's seven.
- At one stage of the season Liverpool held a 25-point lead – the biggest-ever in English top-flight history.
- They equalled the Premier League record of 18 consecutive victories, which also set a new club record.
- By winning their opening eight league games of the season they became the first team ever in top-flight history to achieve the feat twice.
- The Reds won a British-record fourth UEFA Super Cup.
- They became the first British team ever to hold the European Cup, UEFA Super Cup, FIFA Club World Cup and domestic league title simultaneously.
- They also became the first team in English top-flight history to play in five different competitions within the space of 27 days.

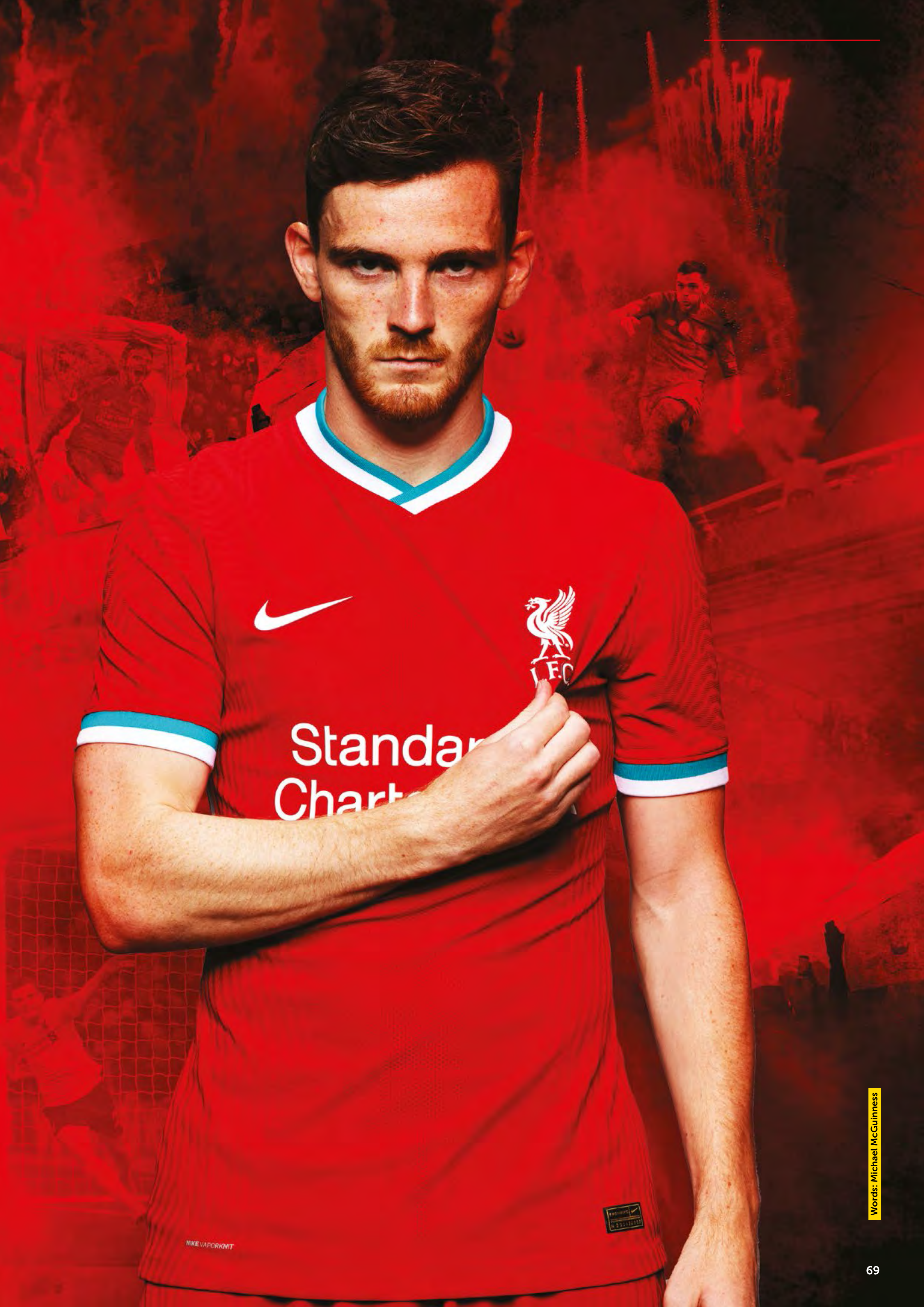


- Klopp's side occupied top spot in the league for each of the last 37 'rounds' and were only off the summit for seven of the 353 days that the campaign lasted. They led every day since 17 August.
- For the first time in their history, Liverpool defeated every other team in a league season.
- They set a new club record of 13 league 'doubles' in a season, bettering 2018/19 (with 12) and in doing so also equalled the English top-flight record.
- The Reds set a new club best of 14 away wins in a league campaign, eclipsing the 13 in 1904/05 (over 17 games in Division Two) as well as the number achieved in 2008/09 and 2018/19.
- They set a new club record of 99 points in a season – one more than the 98 gained in a 42-game campaign in 1978/79 (adjusted to three points for a win).
- They equalled a club best of 44 points away from home in a league season, set in 2018/19.
- Liverpool remained unbeaten at Anfield for a third consecutive league season for the first time in their history.
- They also won the latest-ever league title – confirmed on 25 June.
- The Reds provided 17 different scorers in the league campaign, equalling the club record.
- They set a new club record of eight away league wins in a row.
- They established a club record of 44 games unbeaten in the league.
- They also set a club record of 21 away league games without defeat.
- And, finally, the Reds set a new club record by scoring in the opening 27 games of a league season!



RED ROBBO

Three seasons with Liverpool, still never lost a league game at Anfield, here are some of Andy's best moments so far



Words: Michael McGuinness

1 Anfield arrival

"It feels a bit surreal," remarked a 23-year-old Andy Robertson after signing for the Reds in the summer of 2017, having worked his way up from the Scottish fourth tier in little over four years. "I just want to prove to people that I can do it at this level, and hopefully I manage to do that this season and do good things for this club."

His new manager in Jürgen Klopp added: "This is another big step on what has been a quite incredible personal journey in a very short space of time. I know our environment will benefit him and help him push himself even more than he has already. This is a player who does not limit his ambition."

The Scot took the no26 shirt which later became even more special as the date of his son's birthday.



2 Sneak preview, hard yards

Solid displays in three early-season appearances gave Kopites a sample of what was to come, but Andy also worked on his game out of the side and made the left-back position his own when December 2017 came around.

After his debut in the 1-0 win over Crystal Palace, *The Guardian* reported Robertson "made the biggest impression. The quality of his crossing immediately stood out and will prove a potent asset."

Andy also had Sir Kenny Dalglish's help settling into life at Anfield: "I spoke to him a lot at the start, from the get-go he's been so crucial for me. Not many people can say they can turn to Kenny Dalglish for a bit of advice! Him and his wife [Marina] have been exceptional with me and my family."





3 First choice, full throttle

"The fans love him. It started with that 90-yard press of Man City – he pressed everyone in their team I think, went to the keeper and then did them all again! I think how good Robbo has been since he's been at the club has been incredible really. He's got good quality and [is a] good defender. He's good around the dressing-room as well, he's good *craic*."

The words of James Milner, summing up how we all felt when Robertson charged down practically the entire Manchester City team during the enthralling 4-3 victory in January 2018, becoming a mainstay and fan favourite if he wasn't already.



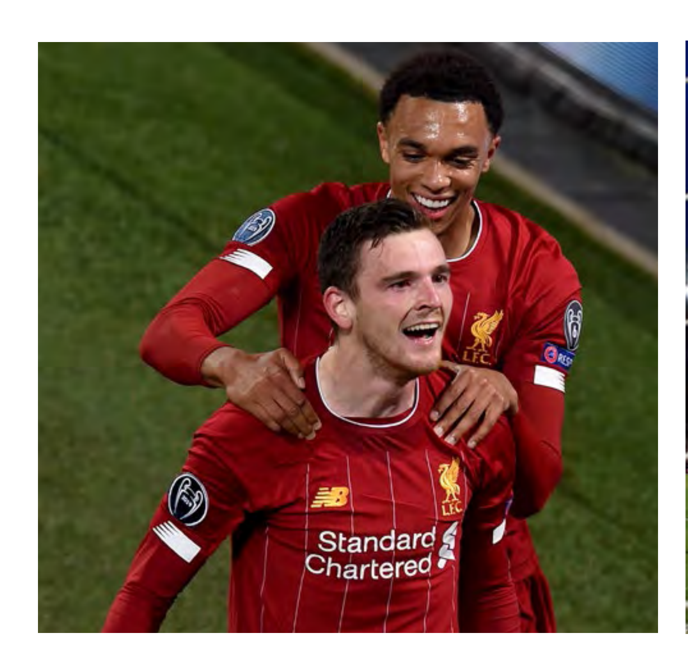
4 First goal, first trophy

While his first season brought a first goal against Brighton, and first final in Kiev, Andy and his team-mates went one better in Madrid the following campaign.

Though resolute and adventurous in the Spurs showpiece, it's perhaps the semi-final tussles with Barcelona stars Luis Suarez and Lionel Messi that stand out, with Andy himself recalling supporters' appreciation of giving as good as he got.

"Liverpool fans like the edge, I think," he said. "I feel that maybe this whole team is quite good at representing Liverpool right now. Liverpool is a big working-class city. We go out and show hard work.

"We get beaten in games but what you can't question is that every time we go out there, we give 100 per cent."



5 Full-backs 2.0

Andy Robertson and his good pal on the other flank, Trent Alexander-Arnold, are reinventing the full-back role under their manager's style of play. Their numbers for crosses, chances created and assists are consistently the top two in the division for defenders and right up there even when you compare with the league's attacking talent too, all helped by a friendly competition to see who gets the most goal contributions per season!

The two even combined directly at the end of a free-flowing move that saw Robertson convert Trent's low cross for his first Champions League goal in the 4-3 home win over FC Salzburg. By the end of his third term here, Robbo had four goals and a phenomenal 30 assists.



6 Supporting Foodbanks

It's not just on the field where Robertson's impact has been felt. He's a regular supporter of the Fans Supporting Foodbanks initiative and has reportedly donated more than 50,000 meals to those in need in his hometown of Glasgow this year.

"I've always been associated with foodbanks but I wish I wasn't, as that means they wouldn't exist," he said recently.

"I don't like going to foodbanks, I don't like seeing people suffer and we should be doing a lot more to help these people. Unfortunately it's become part-and-parcel of society these days and become more common, so when people are in an unfortunate position then I like to give something back."

7 Head Bhoy

Andy was released as a Celtic youngster for reportedly being too small. Rewind to one of the Reds' most crucial moments in the title-winning campaign, in what was until its closing stages a frustrating November outing at Villa Park. He rose highest from Sadio Mane's right-wing cross to level the scores in the 88th minute before the Senegalese star himself glanced in a stoppage-time winner.

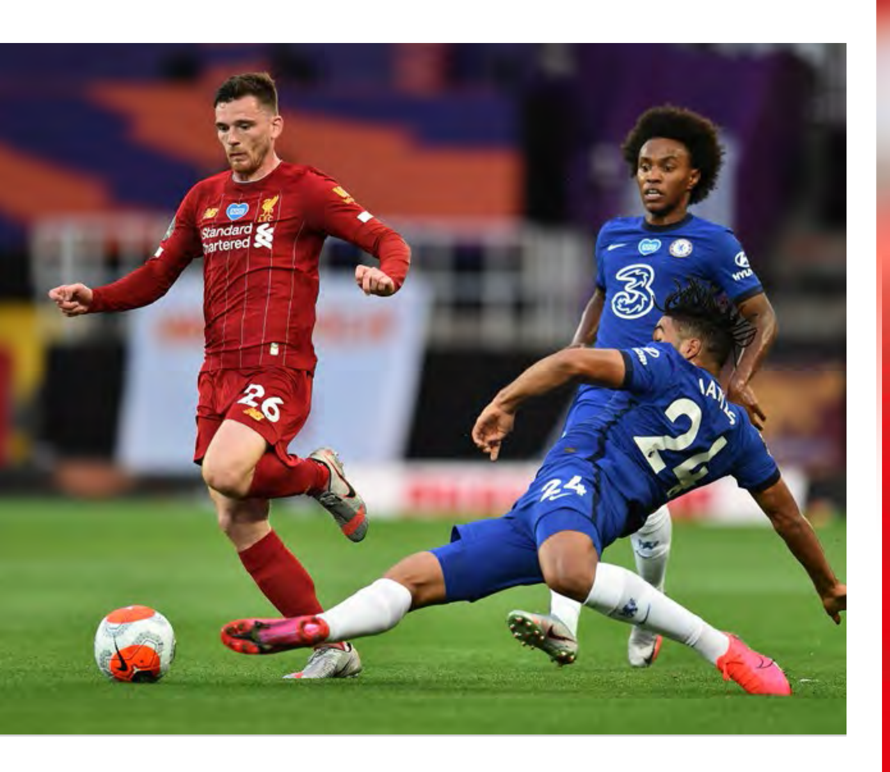
"I don't score many goals, especially with my head!" laughed Robertson. "It's amazing what happens when you close your eyes and hope for the best. That weekend was a massive result for us and kept our momentum going."



8 Lifting spirits

Several Reds can claim to be kings of social media, from James Milner embracing the 'Boring Milner' persona to Bobby Firmino practicing piano and no-look finishes with his wife in goal! Robertson provides plenty of entertainment for his Reds followers too, but the 2020 lockdown also gave the chance to give something back on through LFC Connect, an initiative to support Reds in social isolation during the pandemic through Zoom video calls.

"You've more than made my day, you've made my quarantine!" said Brian, a 'walking footballer' with the club's Red Neighbours community programme, during one of the many calls the team – and manager – made earlier this year.

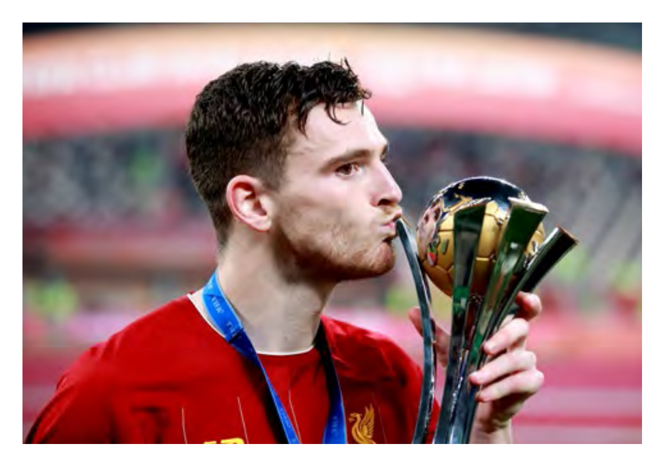


9 Final flourish

Liverpool's post-lockdown results were a little hit-and-miss but Robertson would finish the campaign strongly with a goal contribution in each of the last five Premier League games.

His corner-kick met the head of Mo Salah at Brighton, he looped in another header of his own in the 1-1 home draw with Burnley and also teed up strikes for Sadio Mane (at Arsenal) and Divock Origi (at Newcastle).

The best, though, may well have been the last goal scored at Anfield in 2019/20, with Robbo playing a key role in a back-to-front move that ended with Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain firing home the Scot's centre to secure three points in the 5-3 thriller with Chelsea. Lung-busting run, perfect cross.



10 Champion of everything

In just about three years as a Red, he's gone from low-key signing to first-team regular, first-team favourite even, and from league and European Cup runner-up to winner of them both. There's been a UEFA Super Cup and FIFA Club World Cup for good measure too, while the only league game he's ever lost at Anfield was for Hull City in 2016!

The Reds have won 92 of the 127 games in which Robbo has featured, with many more to come from the left-back who recently stated he "would love to be able to finish my career here".

Not bad at all from "just a wee guy from Glasgow living the absolute dream," as he once tweeted.



WIN ANDY'S NEW BOOK!

ROBBO: NOW YOU'RE GONNA BELIEVE US is the inside story of an unrivalled period in the illustrious history of Liverpool Football Club – as seen through Andy Roberton's eyes.

Taking you behind the scenes at Anfield and Melwood, he reveals how it all happened, how doubters turned to believers.

From the heartbreak of Champions League final defeat to Real Madrid in 2018 through to that first top-flight league title in 30 years and taking in the unprecedented drama of the lockdown, this is a revealing story that will fascinate and inspire fans.

Published by Reach Sport on 17 September (price £20) and available from official club stores and liverpoolfc.com, we've got three copies to give away.

To be in with a chance of winning, simply tell us:

Before this season Andy had scored one goal in European competition for Liverpool – against which team?

Email your answer, name and address with 'Andy Robbo Book Competition' in the subject bar to **liverpoolfcmag@reachsport.com** – closing date is Friday 9 October 2020, normal competition rules apply.





2020 VISION

Barry takes over Under-23s with a former Bolton star assisting him, while Marc moves up to U18s

There will be a new look to the coaching staff of Liverpool FC's Under-23s and Under-18s teams this season.

Following the departure of Under-23s coach Neil Critchley to League One side Blackpool back in March, Barry Lewtas has stepped up to take charge after a couple of successful seasons with the U18s.

Also moving up an age-group to replace him is Marc Bridge-Wilkinson who was previously in charge of the U16s.

Assisting Lewtas with the U23s is former Portsmouth, Middlesbrough, West Ham, Norwich and Bolton midfielder Gary O'Neil. Named Bolton's player of the year as recently as 2018/19, he stepped back from playing last season after a serious Achilles injury. Gary played 14 times against Liverpool during his career.

"I'm really excited," he told the club's website. "I've been desperate to get going. It's been going on for a little while and obviously with the break and the Academy having to take an even longer break than the first team, I've had to wait a little while. But now it's finally come around and I'm really excited and can't wait to get going.

"Barry is great. He has got a wealth of experience of working with the boys. Obviously he's come through a lot of the age-groups with the lads as well, so he knows them very well. I think as a team, me and Barry will work very well and there's some fantastic players to work with.

"For me to have the opportunity to work with such a talented group of young players at such an early part of my coaching career, I feel very privileged."

Academy director Alex Inglethorpe added: "Gary's knowledge, experience and passion for the game will not only help the players that he works with but also the staff as well."

Lewtas meanwhile is looking forward to his next challenge of helping to develop the U23s squad.

"It's a real honour. It's a huge job with big responsibility and I'm really thankful to Alex for this opportunity. It's a nice feeling to think that he trusts me to do the job. There's Alex as well as a whole host of other members of staff across my time at the Academy who have been a really good support and helped me to this point so far.

"I think with every age-group you have at the club there's a huge responsibility to look after the player and look after the person that's in your hands, really. It's a real kind of pivotal time in their young careers so to be able to support them at this point of the journey is something I'm really proud to do and really excited to do as well. So that's probably the bit I'm looking forward to the most."

Bridge-Wilkinson first arrived in Kirkby from Huddersfield Town in 2015. The 41-year-old is also excited at the prospect of working with a talented squad as he takes the reins with the U18s.

"I'm really proud, really honoured and really happy to have accepted the role, so I can't wait to get started," he says.

"I arrived at Liverpool from a different club as the Under-14s coach. I did that role for 16 or 18 months and over time I've kind of progressed up, so I then took the U15s for a period of time and then the U16s for a couple of years. And thankfully now I've been offered this opportunity.

"It's interesting because when I first joined, Barry was in



Marc Bridge-Wilkinson

THE MAIN AIM IS TO HELP INDIVIDUALS DEVELOP, WE'LL BE JUDGED ON PLAYERS GETTING INTO THE FIRST TEAM

charge of the age-group above me and it's almost like as Barry has moved, I have as well!

"Over the years we have built up a good relationship and we will continue to do that. We speak quite regularly, daily when we are in the building, around issues with my group or his group or just general football queries and conversations, and that will continue.

"Barry is a great guy, he's a great coach and I for one have learned a lot from watching him and being around him over the years.

"My main aim is to help the individuals develop. Ultimately we are going to be judged on players getting into our first team, so obviously last season when I was with the Under-16s, to see the likes of Layton Stewart, James Norris and Tom Hill getting the opportunity to go with the older boys and play competitive fixtures was fantastic, James Balagizi playing for the U18s as well.

"It's great to see the individuals developing and moving forward and hopefully taking the next step, then the next step again. And who knows – one day it could be someone running out at Anfield and doing what we all hope they will."

A number of players have signed new deals with the Reds ahead of the new season. Seven have signed their first professional contracts: goalkeepers Jakub Ojrzynski and Ben Winterbottom, defenders Billy Koumetio, Owen Beck, Remi Savage and James Norris plus last season's U18s captain and forward Fidel O'Rourke.

Meanwhile there have been new deals agreed with keeper Vitezslav Jaros, defender Conor Bradley, midfielders Abdi Sharif, Liam Coyle and Tom Hill and attackers Layton Stewart, Luis Longstaff and Joe Hardy.

New long-term contracts have been agreed by defender

Gary O'Neil



KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES

Midfielder Curtis Jones was named as the Premier League 2 Player of the Season for 2019/20.

He netted nine times in PL2 before the campaign was curtailed due to the pandemic earlier this year and held off competition from Billy Gilmour (Chelsea), Jahmal Hector-Ingram (Derby County), Liam Cullen (Swansea City), Rayhaan Tulloch (West Brom) and Nathan Holland (West Ham) to land the award.

Of course Curtis also made a dozen appearances for the first team, scoring an Anfield winner against Everton in the FA Cup third-round tie, having previously converted a decisive penalty against Arsenal in the Carabao Cup shoot-out after a 5-5 draw. He subsequently netted his first Premier League goal in early July, against Aston Villa at the Kop end, and received a Premier League winner's medal after the final home game against Chelsea.

On receiving the prize, he said: "I'm buzzing. Any time I've played for the Under-23s I've always tried to give it 100 per cent. I have to give a massive thank-you to the staff who were there, Critch [Neil Critchley], Jenks [Tim Jenkins] and Barry [Lewtas] with the U19s. I've got to thank my team-mates and give them credit as well."

Jones, who will wear the no17 shirt for the seniors next season, added: "I was always talking about wanting to score more goals and in training I was always working on that. I had a season with Steven Gerrard when I scored a few and then I came into the U23s.

"At first I didn't play as many games as I would've liked but I've got to be respectful to the gaffer and the staff and thank them for keeping me around the team. Last season I got plenty of games and I also felt there was a bigger role for me when the boys looked to see if I could pop up with something, and I think the stats showed I did it when it was needed. Seventeen goals, 20 including the first team, is pleasing and I hope there's many more to come."

I HAVE TO GIVE A MASSIVE THANK-YOU TO NEIL CRITCHLEY, TIM JENKINS AND BARRY LEWTAS, AS WELL AS MY TEAM-MATES

Adam Lewis, who has joined French Ligue 2 side Amiens on loan for the 2020/21 campaign, and midfielders Leighton Clarkson and Jake Cain.

Centre-back Morgan Boyes completes a season-long loan move to Fleetwood Town. The 19-year-old, who made two appearances for the Reds first team last term, will now look to make his mark with the League One side.

Meanwhile, a change to the structure of the Premier League Academy Games Programme means Division One will comprise of 13 teams. Three new Category 1 Academies – Burnley, Crystal Palace and Leeds United – will enter a 14-strong Division Two next season.

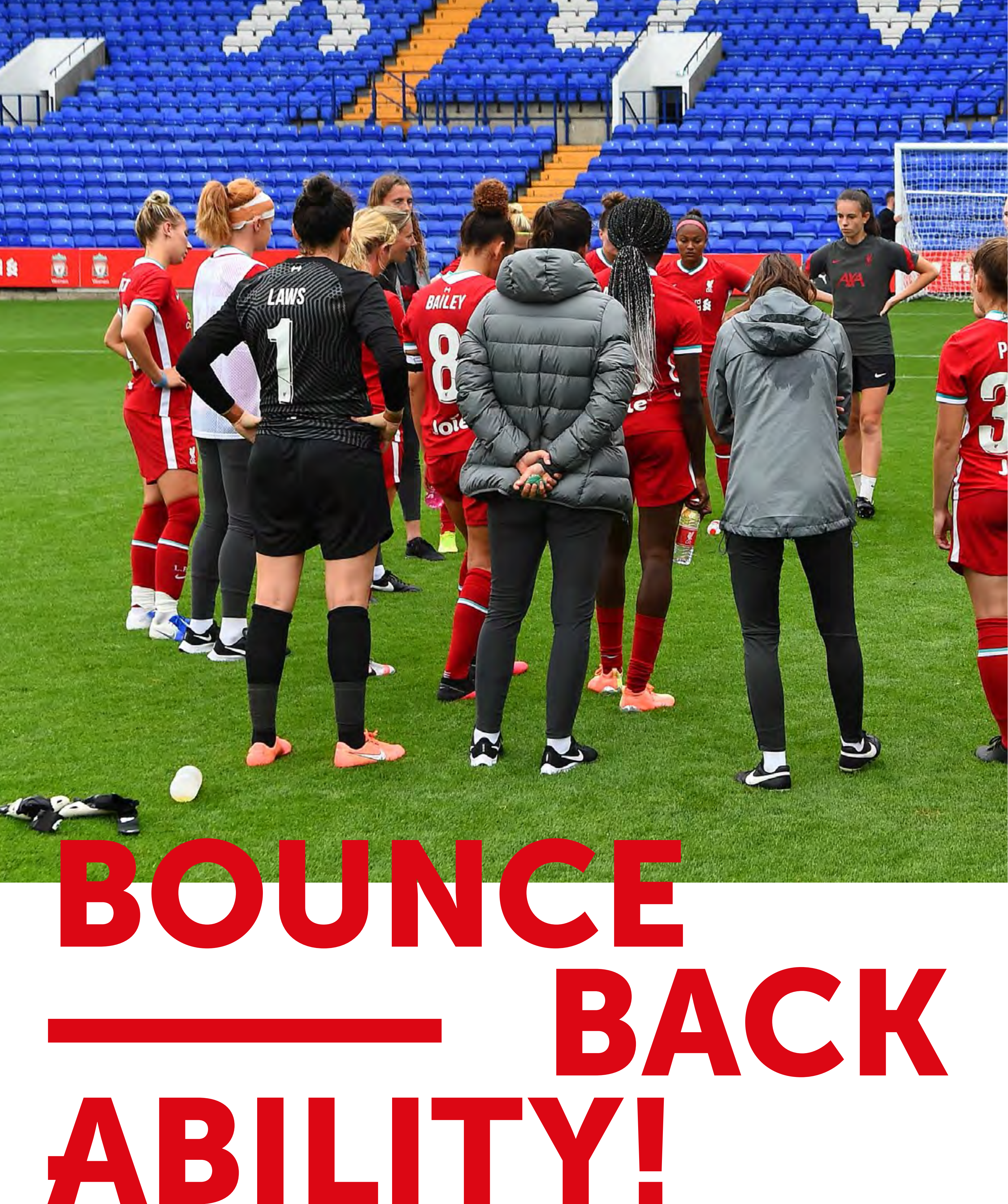
In the group stages of the EFL trophy, the U21s will visit Port Vale, Tranmere Rovers and Wigan Athletic. The Reds were drawn into Group D of the northern section that sees teams play each other only once. As an invited Premier League club, Liverpool are scheduled to play each of their three group matches away from home.

The winners and runners-up in each group for both the northern and southern sections will progress to the last 32, with the tournament then undertaking a knockout format.



BEST WISHES JOHN... OOH-AHH!

It's the big 'four-oh' for former Reds left-back John Arne Riise in September. The Norwegian, who scored 31 goals in 348 appearances for Liverpool, has maintained strong links with the club and regularly turns out for the Legends team. He's pictured here applauding the fans at the end of the LFC Foundation Charity Match against Real Madrid in March 2017.



BOUNCE BACK ABILITY!

After the disappointment of relegation via points-per-game, the Reds are raring to reclaim their place in the Women's Super League, as manager Vicky Jepson makes clear in this exclusive chat

It will have been an astonishing 195 days between your last league game at West Ham in February and the Championship opener against Durham on 5 September. You and the squad must be itching to get going again?

Yes, we are! A lot has happened in those 195 days and although that's been the case for every football team during the course of the pandemic, I think our circumstances were unique.

To be relegated on points-per-game presented a lot of difficulties and, of course, it was really tough to take. But the reality is that's long-gone now. We were training for seven weeks ahead of the start of the season and there's a determination among the whole squad to leave the past behind now.

There's a real grit in the teeth to maintain high standards every single week and to write a positive future. I have complete faith that the girls have the ability to do that, but now of course we have to prove we can.



There has been a feeling that women's sport has been overlooked since lockdown so it must have been great to see the spotlight falling back on football last month with the Champions League games and the Community Shield at Wembley?

Definitely. I think the main difference in terms of football at the elite level has been that our league is run by the FA while the men's game is run by the Premier League. The Premier League has paid for all our testing to make sure we could return to training and Liverpool Football Club have been tremendously supportive.

Our club would have done everything they could to have helped us finish last season but unfortunately that was ultimately taken out of our hands and we have to respect that decision. Of course we felt that we would have stayed up had we been able to play those remaining games and, in the end, one more goal would have probably saved us.

But, if anything, that has helped drive it home that at elite level, the small details matter. That has been our 'take home' message really. Every detail has to be right.

It's good to see the women's game back now, albeit behind-closed-doors, and of course we're really looking forward to being able to welcome our fans back and play in front of them again, hopefully in the not-too-distant future.

How would you assess the squad's preparations for the new season?

I'm really pleased with the way the girls have gone about things since they reported back. Of course we know that there will be different challenges posed in the Championship to the Super League and we have to be ready to meet those challenges every single week.

We know that we will have to work for every win

and we have been stressing to the players that we expect them to produce performances of the standards expected of a Liverpool player and the badge they have on their shirts.

Our new captain Niamh Fahey and vice-captain Rachel Furness have been leading from the front in that respect and it really feels like a blank canvas which is refreshing.

We deliberately designed a pre-season programme which included games against several WSL clubs as well as other Championship teams as we wanted to test ourselves and I've been very pleased with how we played in those fixtures.

Of course we understand that the Championship will throw up many problems but we also believe in ourselves and we know that we are doing all we can to regain what we feel is our rightful place in the Super League, for ourselves, for our fans and, most importantly, for the club.

Centurion and new skippers

Ashley Hodson's first appearance of 2020/21 was set to be her 100th for the club. The long-serving no14 (below left) was due to become only the second Liverpool FC Women's player in the WSL era to reach the landmark, following in the footsteps of former title-winning captain Gemma Bonner (115).

The 25-year-old came through the club's youth system under Vicky Jepson and made her senior debut in 2014. The boss says: "It's well-deserved. Ash has had an incredible career at this club and she'd play in any position we asked her.

"She's had to fight back from some major injury issues but she has always shown her determination. She's a social butterfly who all the girls love to be around and she'll play a big part for us this season."

Meanwhile Niamh Fahey (below right) has taken the Reds armband with captain Sophie Bradley-Auckland unavailable for the foreseeable future. Sophie had combined leading Liverpool with working in her family-run care home in Nottingham, and as a key worker looking after elderly residents she's had to put her footballing career on hold during the pandemic.

Niamh, an experienced Republic of Ireland international, has served as vice-captain for the past two seasons and says: "As a supporter, now being captain is beyond my wildest dreams and I want to embody the spirit of the club and bring out the values of a Liverpool player." In turn, Northern Ireland international Rachel Furness steps up to be vice-captain.

Jepson adds: "In Niamh you have someone leading the team who loves the club as much as I do – she knows the power of the badge and the expectation from our fans.

"Furney was only with us for ten weeks before the league was terminated. It was the right decision to ask her to work alongside Niamh and take the armband when Niamh's not on the field. They both share that determination and passion."







WE HAVE BEEN STRESSING TO THE PLAYERS THAT WE EXPECT THEM TO PRODUCE PERFORMANCES OF THE STANDARDS EXPECTED OF A LIVERPOOL PLAYER

As the biggest name in the Championship this season, there will be inevitable pressure and a lot of expectation on the squad to bounce back?

We know that we will be in the limelight as any relegated club would be. The pressure will be high and I have no doubt that every team we play against will try to step it up a notch whenever they play us.

We're under no illusions that this standard is still very good. But we feel that we have enough ability in the squad to do well. We're in the right headspace, but now we have to focus week-by-week to try and produce consistent performances.

Almost half of the Championship clubs play their home games on 3G/4G pitches and you have incorporated matches on those surfaces into your pre-season planning...

I think that's one of the main differences between the WSL and the Championship. Medically it has been proven that there can be risks for women's players when they suddenly switch from playing on grass to 3G pitches. We will be working closely with our club doctor to try and gain the best advice about how to prepare for that and also whether we do our prep in the week leading up to those games on the 3G pitches at our Academy.

Of course we want to minimise the risk of injuries wherever possible. We played a pre-season game at Coventry as part of our build-up. We had played on the wide open pitch at Tranmere against Brighton the week before and there was no doubt that at Coventry we faced very different challenges on a narrower pitch with a different bounce of the ball. But the girls did really well that day and hopefully that will be a big help to us when we come to play on those surfaces.

We know that both teams will be playing on the same surface and hopefully if we perform to the best of our ability in those games, the scorelines will look after themselves.

You have made four new signings and also augmented the squad with some talented youngsters…

The new signings have all settled in really well. One area we really struggled in last season was scoring goals and we believe Amalie Thestrup will score plenty for us. She's a number nine who has already scored several during pre-season, and some against WSL teams too, so we're hopeful she will prove to be a very good addition to our squad.

Taylor Hinds is a left-footed left-back which is rarer than you'd think at this level and she has featured in all our pre-season games. She is still learning her game-craft but she's a young player with a lot of experience, having played in the WSL and also been part of Mo Marley's England squad at age-group World Cups.

Rachael Laws in goal is someone I can't speak highly enough of. She's a natural leader who exudes positive energy and gives us options in terms of going short or long with her distribution, and she's a really encouraging voice around the squad.

She is working with two young goalkeepers in Rylee Foster and Eleanor Heeps and is pushing them hard to improve every single day. When Rylee played the second half of our pre-season game at Coventry, she was on the sidelines giving her plenty of encouragement which was great to see.

With Meikayla Moore, we wanted to find a centre-half who had age on her side but with experience at a top-flight level. Meikayla has that from her time in Germany [with MSV Duisburg and FC Koln] but also from her considerable international experience [with New Zealand].

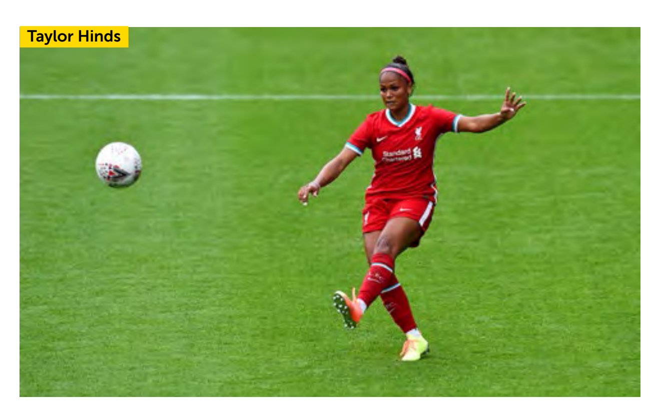
We spoke with her international coach, who gave her an incredible reference. This was an area we needed to add depth to and she has a really high ceiling in terms of potential.

In terms of younger players, Eleanor and midfielders Mia Heeps and Lucy Parry have been involved in the pre-season and done well. They're very young but really talented players and while we don't want to be relying on young players, it's great to see them coming through.

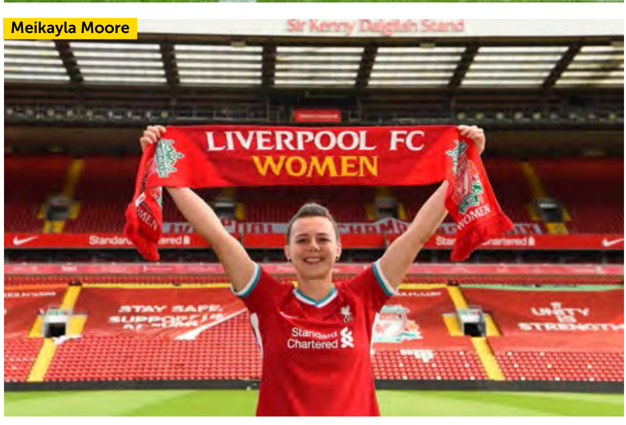
It must have been encouraging to see so many of the existing team commit themselves to the club despite dropping down a league…

Absolutely. The reality is that when you drop down a division, you really have 24 hours to try and retain your players as there will inevitably be interest in them from other clubs and I needed decisions quickly.

Niamh Fahey was the first. She said, 'This is my club and I don't want to go anywhere'. Then 'Furney' was the same, Robey


Taylor Hinds


Amalie Thestrup



Meikayla Moore


Rachael Laws

[Leighanne Robe], Rinsola [Babajide] and Razza [Rhiannon Roberts] and many others too.

There are so many players in this squad that I am excited about. Rinsola was voted player of the year by the fans last season and she looks to be in a great headspace. I'm sure she will be a real fans' favourite again this season. She was involved in most of our goals during pre-season and I really think that if she continues to progress she is capable of earning a call-up for the Lionesses.

Peter Moore stood down at the end of August and as well as being club CEO he was also chairman of the women's team. How do you reflect on his impact?

Peter and his wife Debbie have been two really important people for us and we will miss them both a huge amount. Of course on a personal level I will always be grateful to Peter as he appointed me as manager but he was a real friend to the women's section.

How many other Premier League CEOs regularly attend women's games? It was indicative of his support that even though he was standing down, he came to two of our pre-season games.

That's very rare. He's protected us when things have been tough and unlocked access within the club and opened doors for us which has been important.

Debbie has also been a tremendous support. During lockdown she held some online yoga sessions with the girls which were a lot of fun with that California vibe! I know that those sessions are something the girls really miss now.

They will both be very much missed and leave a good legacy at the club. I know Billy Hogan well too and I am excited about the next chapter for the women's team at this football club.

You kick off the season against two teams that finished in the top five last season, Durham and London Bees, so it's a tough start...

Yes, we always work one game at a time but I really think Durham are one of the best teams in the league. They always manage to have a consistent squad and have players who battle for each other



throughout every 90 minutes they play. I also think that they are extremely well coached by Steph [Libbey] so it will be a really tough start for us.

That said, we just can't wait for the season to get started and gather momentum again. As I say, there will be plenty of attention on any team that goes down but we feel that we have enough experience in the squad and players that are good enough to get us back into the WSL.

We realise that it's not going to be easy but we're all focused and determined to do well.



Liverpool FC Women's squad 2020/21

GOALKEEPERS
1 RACHAEL LAWS
13 RYLEE FOSTER
25 ELEANOR HEEPS

DEFENDERS
2 BECKY JANE
3 LEIGHANNE ROBE
5 NIAMH FAHEY
6 SOPHIE BRADLEY-AUCKLAND
12 TAYLOR HINDS
15 MEIKAYLA MOORE

MIDFIELDERS
4 RHIANNON ROBERTS
8 JADE BAILEY
19 AMY RODGERS
21 MISSY BO KEARNS
24 KIRSTY LINNETT
27 RACHEL FURNESS
29 MIA ROSS

FORWARDS
7 JESS CLARKE
9 AMALIE THESTRUP
10 RINSOLA BABAJIDE
11 MELISSA LAWLEY
14 ASHLEY HODSON



REDS ARE READY

Liverpool FC Women duo Leighanne Robe and Kirsty Linnett are all smiles on the training ground as they look ahead to the 2020/21 season. Defender Leighanne, left, and midfielder Kirsty are both about to start their third seasons with the Reds and were among the first to commit to new contracts following relegation to the Championship when the season was decided on points-per-game. "Last year was disappointing and it would be nice to try to rectify that and get us back to where we belong," says Kirsty. Leighanne adds: "Liverpool's a huge club so I'm delighted to still be a part of it, fighting to get us back to where we should be in the top league. There's not many changes in the team and we want to fight for each other and fight for the club."


24
LFC
AXA
24
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mitre



"MEMORIES I WILL CHERISH FOREVER"

After three years with his beloved Reds, chief executive officer Peter Moore bids an emotional farewell, while Billy Hogan vows to "continue the great work done"

Peter Moore stepped down as Liverpool FC's chief executive officer at the end of August, following a successful three-year contract overseeing the club's off-pitch business operations.

Peter left the UK permanently in 1981 for the United States and enjoyed a successful career at Sega, Reebok, Microsoft and EA. He returned to this country in 2017 to take up a three-season post as Liverpool Football Club's CEO and during his tenure he has played an important role in the club's commercial, community and civic responsibilities.

On behalf of Fenway Sports Group, principal owner John W Henry, chairman Tom Werner and president Mike Gordon said: "We would like to place on record our gratitude to Peter for his contribution and moving the club forward over the past three seasons.

"He has strengthened the club's business operations through his leadership and we are grateful to him for his passion, dedication and support. We wish him, his wife Debbie and their families every success for the future as they return to the US and hope they will come back to visit us to take in a few games at Anfield."

Peter said: "I've loved every minute of the job here in Liverpool and feel privileged to have moved the club forward on its civic, commercial and community operations during the last three years. It's been an incredible journey and I'd like to pay tribute to John, Tom and Mike for giving me the opportunity to lead the business operations at Liverpool.

"I've had the great pleasure of working with an exceptionally talented senior leadership team; a group of committed colleagues who work tirelessly for the club; former players; business, community and civic partners and sponsors; incredible supporters around the world and so many other people I've met through my role as CEO. I'm indebted to so many people I've met on this journey at Liverpool.

"To think we have won the UEFA Champions League, FIFA Club World Cup and now the Premier League title during my time here is way beyond my dreams. It's been a phenomenal achievement by the manager, players and staff. The team fully deserves the plaudits and recognition – and the memories I will cherish forever."

Peter, left, with former players at the unveiling of the new Bob Paisley statue earlier in 2020

He added: "I came back to Liverpool in 2017 having been in the US for over 30 years and it's been such a special experience.

"My wife and I married here two years ago and we go back to the US to our families with mixed emotions. Excited and looking forward to being reunited with our families and grown-up children in the US; emotional about leaving Liverpool which we've loved every minute of the opportunity to make a difference and leave our mark in the history of this great city and club."

Billy Hogan, currently managing director and chief commercial officer, assumed the role of chief executive officer from 1 September. Billy is a strong leader with more than 16 years' institutional knowledge and experience in football and sports industries.

"On behalf of all our staff, partners and other stakeholders, I'd like to place on record our thanks to Peter for his leadership during the past three seasons and wish him well on his return to the US with his wife Debbie," he said.

"Having been privileged to work at this club for over eight years, it is truly an honour to take up the role of chief executive officer and continue with the great work that has been done to date across the entire organisation.

"I thank John, Tom and Mike for this opportunity to lead the business into the next phase of this exciting chapter."

Billy will continue to operate from the club's London and Liverpool offices and will be supported by a strong and experienced leadership team.

On top of the world with Virgil van Dijk



What's On

SEPT/OCT





LEEDS AT ANFIELD THEN IT'S LONDON CALLING FOR REDS

The Reds start their quest for back-to-back Premier League titles when they host promoted Leeds United, their old rivals from the late 1960s and early 70s, on the opening weekend. It will be the first time there has been a 'Canal derby' in the top-flight since the 2003/04 season when the sides drew 2-2 at Elland Road after Liverpool had won the Anfield encounter 3-1.

Marcelo Bielsa's side won the Championship by ten points last season and will be eager to make a strong start back in the top-flight. The West Yorkshire club have never lost their first Premier League fixture of a season.

The Reds visit Chelsea the following week before hosting Arsenal at Anfield on the final weekend of September, with a midweek Carabao Cup tie also in the mix. Liverpool will enter the competition at the third-round stage with the draw set to take place after the second-round ties on 15/16 of the month.

SEPT/OCT

What's On

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE RETURNS



The draw for the group stages of the 2020/21 UEFA Champions League takes place in Athens on 1 October. Due to the compacted fixture calendar for the new season, Matchdays One to Three will take place on consecutive midweeks from mid-October to early November while Matchdays Four to Six will mirror that arrangement from late November into December.

Liverpool will be looking for another successful run in the tournament which is set to conclude on Saturday 29 May 2021 at the Ataturk Stadium in Istanbul, scene of the triumph against AC Milan 16 years previously.

The Reds will appear in Pot One for the draw alongside six other domestic champions in holders Bayern Munich, Real Madrid, Juventus, Paris St Germain, Zenit and FC Porto plus six-times Europa League winners Sevilla.

ALL THOSE YEARS AGO...

31 years ago since the Reds beat Crystal Palace 9-0 on 12 September 1989

39 years since Ian Rush scored his first goal for LFC on 30 September 1981

42 years since that famous 7-0 defeat of Tottenham at Anfield on 2 September 1978

46 years since the club's record victory – 11-0 v Stromsgodset on 17 September 1974

56 years since the Reds defeated KR Reykjavik in their first European tie at Anfield on 14 September 1964

52 years since Alun Evans made a scoring debut for Liverpool FC on 21 September 1968

And it's 28 years since Ian Rush broke Roger Hunt's Liverpool FC goalscoring record in Europe on 16 September 1992...

Between 1964 and 1969 Roger Hunt had been at the heart of Liverpool FC's first forays into Europe.

'Sir Roger' had set the benchmark for an LFC marksman in continental competition with 17 goals.

This 1992 Cup Winners' Cup clash with Cypriots Apollon Limassol saw the Reds set out to win the only European tournament that had eluded them and it proved to be a record-breaking night.

A couple of goals from Paul Stewart had given Liverpool a cushion before their Welsh no9 took centre-stage.

Watched by an Anfield crowd of just 12,769, Rush scored his side's third of the night after being played in by Mike Marsh, then equalled Hunt's Euro record five minutes after the re-start when he volleyed home Mark Walters' cross. Five minutes later he set a new high when he headed in another centre from Walters to complete his hat-trick.

Rushie also had time to add a fourth in the 6-1 victory, a goal which took him to within one of Hunt's all-time LFC scoring tally of 285, a total he matched with a goal in the 2-1 win in the second leg in Cyprus a couple of weeks later.

Ian ended his Liverpool career with 20 European goals, a tally since surpassed by Steven Gerrard (41) and Michael Owen (22) and matched by Mohamed Salah.

Another milestone achieved on the night saw debutant midfielder Phil Charnock become the club's youngest player to appear in a European match, aged 17 years, seven months and two days, a record he still holds to this day.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Stephane Henchoz 46 on 7 September

Markus Babbel 48 on 8 September

Steve Ogrizovic 63 on 12 September

David Thompson 43 on 12 September

Karlheinz Riedle 55 on 16 September

John Aldridge 62 on 18 September



Kevin Lewis 80 on 19 September

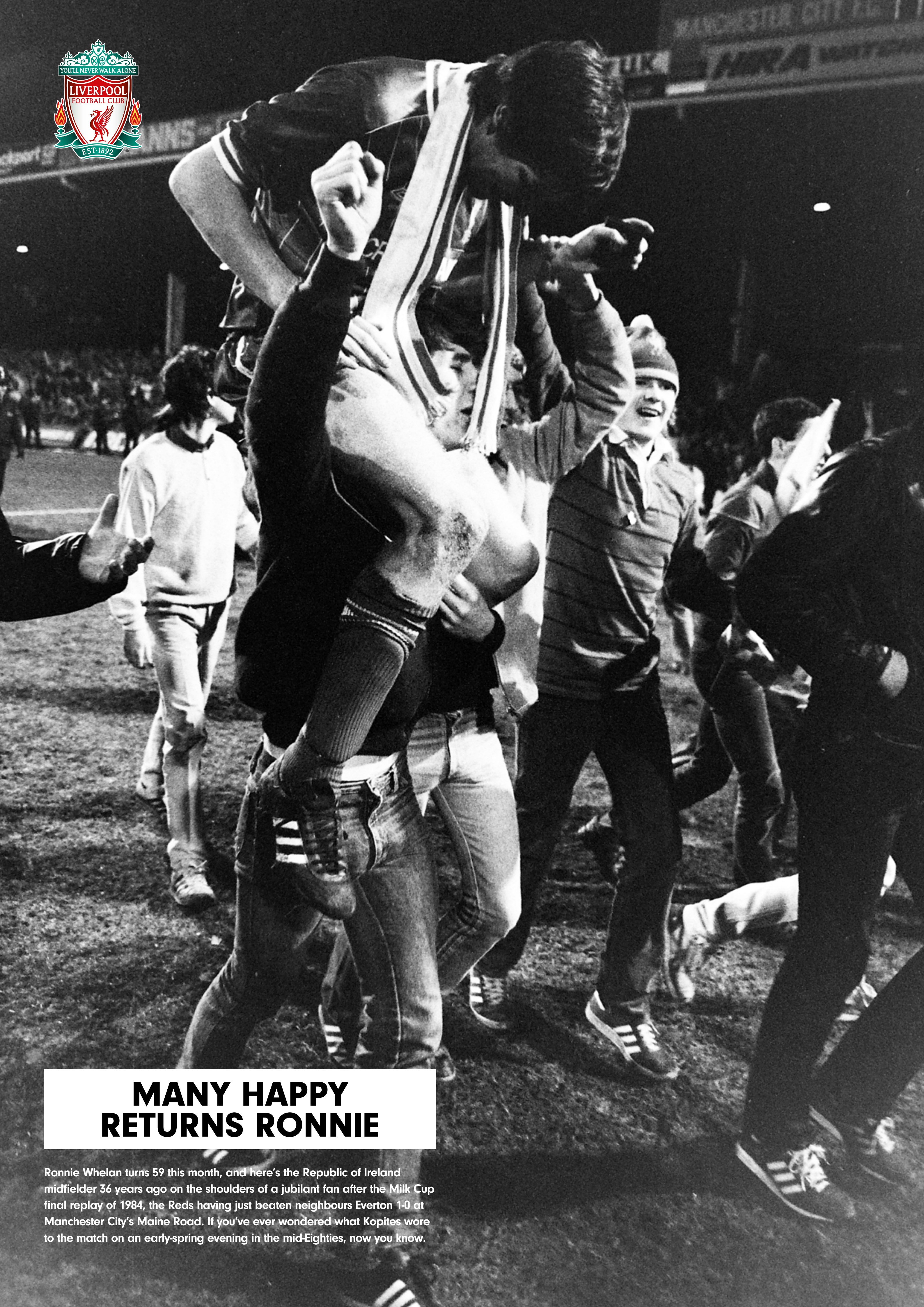
Harry Kewell 42 on 22 September

John Arne Riise 40 on 24 September

Kirsty Linnett 27 on 24 September

Ronnie Whelan 59 on 25 September

Liam Millar 21 on 27 September



MANY HAPPY RETURNS RONNIE

Ronnie Whelan turns 59 this month, and here's the Republic of Ireland midfielder 36 years ago on the shoulders of a jubilant fan after the Milk Cup final replay of 1984, the Reds having just beaten neighbours Everton 1-0 at Manchester City's Maine Road. If you've ever wondered what Kopites wore to the match on an early-spring evening in the mid-Eighties, now you know.



CHAMPIONS 19|20

THE BOOK THAT BRINGS IT HOME

Last year we brought you *CH6MPIONS OF EUROPE*, the brilliant official book commemorating Liverpool's triumph in Madrid with a special scroll of honour inside for fans. This year's companion volume is all about the PREMIER LEAGUE CHAMPIONS – and once again supporters have the chance to be part of this unique piece of LFC history.

LIVERPOOL FC PREMIER LEAGUE CHAMPIONS is a gloriously evocative account of the season that saw Jürgen Klopp's mighty Reds set all sorts of new records as they claimed the title. Now available to pre-order, this commemorative hardback's 320 pages feature exclusive photography, revealing insight from Klopp and his Kop stars, and the season chronicled in full by the editorial team behind the club's monthly magazine and matchday programme. It's produced by LFC's official publishing partners, Reach Sport.

Simply go to the books section at reachsportshop.com and pre-order before they're gone!



Pre-order at **reachsportshop.com**

GET WITH THE PROGRAMME

And there's still time to get your copy of the Liverpool v Chelsea matchday programme, a 100-page souvenir special and officially the fastest-selling Anfield matchday programme of all time. You can order it from reachsportshop.com or the club's official online store at liverpoolfc.com.



WHAT'S IN



MENS GREY MARL RETRO CREST TEE
£25



MENS NAVY COLOUR BLOCK POLO
£25



JUNIOR LIVERBIRD GRAPHIC GREY MARL HOODY
£20



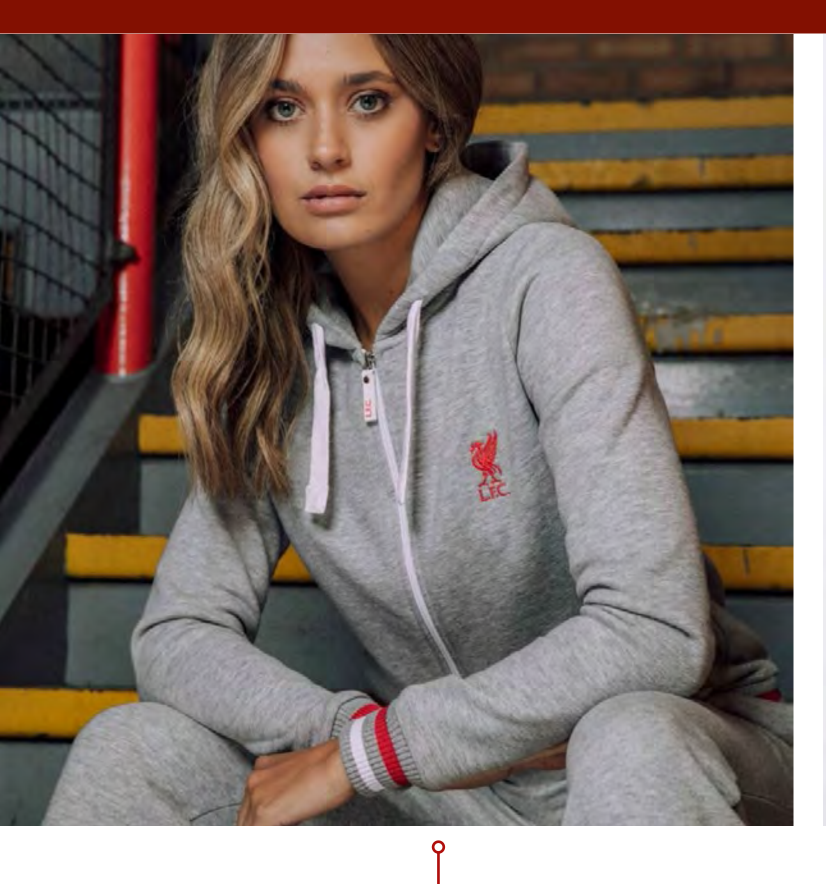
JUNIOR GREY MARL CREST TEE
£12



JUNIOR RED DIAMANTE CREST TEE
£15

STORE

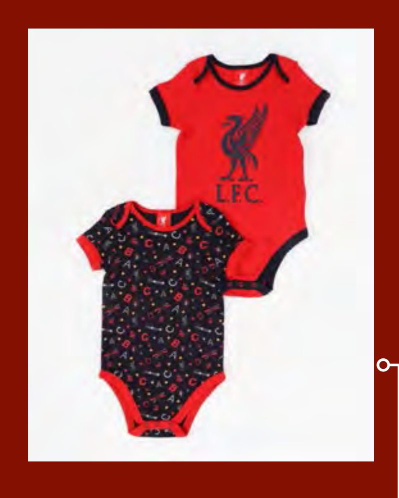
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ON SALE NOW



WOMENS ZIP THROUGH GREY MARL HOODY
£35



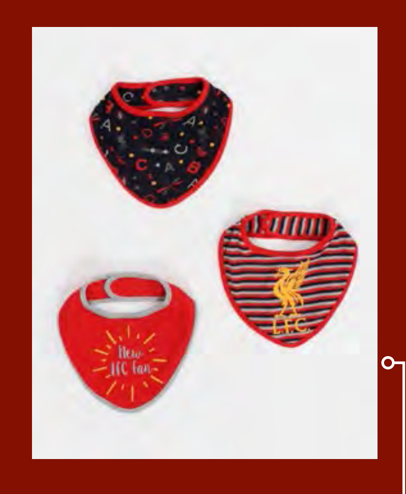
WOMENS CHARCOAL MARL YOU'LL NEVER TEE
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BABY 3 PACK BIBS
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Results & Fixtures 2020/21

AUGUST		SCORE/KO	TV	SCORERS
Sat 29	Arsenal (CS, N)	1-1*	BT	Minamino (pens: Salah, Fabinho, Minamino, Jones)
SEPTEMBER				
Sat 12	**Leeds United (H, 5.30pm)**		**Sky**	
Sun 20	Chelsea (A, 4.30pm)		Sky	
Tue/Wed 22/23	(Carabao Cup 3)			
Mon 28	**Arsenal (H, 8pm)**		**Sky**	
Tue/Wed 29/30	(Carabao Cup 4)			
OCTOBER				
Sat 03	Aston Villa (A)			
Sat 17	Everton (A)			
Tue/Wed 20/21	(UCL Matchday 1, TBC)		BT	
Sat 24	**Sheffield United (H)**			
Tue/Wed 27/28	(UCL Matchday 2, TBC)		BT	
Sat 31	**West Ham United (H)**			
NOVEMBER				
Tue/Wed 03/04	(UCL Matchday 3, TBC)		BT	
Sat 07	Manchester City (A)			
Sat 21	**Leicester City (H)**			
Tue/Wed 24/25	(UCL Matchday 4, TBC)		BT	
Sat 28	Brighton & Hove Albion (A)			
DECEMBER				
Tue/Wed 01/02	(UCL Matchday 5, TBC)		BT	
Sat 05	**Wolverhampton Wanderers (H)**			
Tue/Wed 08/09	(UCL Matchday 6, TBC)		BT	
Sat 12	Fulham (A)			
Wed 16	**Tottenham Hotspur (H)**			
Sat 19	Crystal Palace (A)			
Tue/Wed 22/23	(Carabao Cup Q-F)			
Sat 26	**West Bromwich Albion (H)**			
Mon 28	Newcastle United (A)			
JANUARY				
Sat 02	Southampton (A)			
Tue/Wed 05/06	(Carabao Cup S-F)			
Sat 09	(FA Cup 3)			
Wed 13	**Burnley (H)**			
Sat 16	**Manchester United (H)**			
Sat 23	(FA Cup 4)			
Wed 27	Tottenham Hotspur (A)			
Sat 30	West Ham United (A)			
FEBRUARY				
Wed 03	**Brighton & Hove Albion (H)**			
Sat 06	**Manchester City (H)**			
Wed 10	(FA Cup 5)			
Sat 13	Leicester City (A)			
Tue/Wed 16/17*	(UCL R of 16 1)		BT	
Sat 20	**Everton (H)**			
Tue/Wed 23/24*	(UCL R of 16 1)		BT	
Sat 27	Sheffield United (A)			
Sun 28	(Carabao Cup final)			
MARCH				
Sat 06	**Fulham (H)**			
Tue 09/10*	(UCL R of 16 2)		BT	
Sat 13	Wolverhampton Wanderers (A)			
Tue/Wed 16/17*	(UCL R of 16 2)		BT	
Sat 20	**Chelsea (H)**			
Sat 20	(FA Cup 6)			
APRIL				
Sat 03	Arsenal (A)			
Tue 06/07	(UCL Q-F 1)		BT	
Sat 10	**Aston Villa (H)**			
Tue/Wed 13/14	(UCL Q-F 2)		BT	
Sat 17	Leeds United (A)			
Sat 17	(FA Cup S-F)			
Sat 24	**Newcastle United (H)**			
Tue/Wed 27/28	(UCL S-F 1)		BT	
MAY				
Sat 1	Manchester United (A)			
Tue/Wed 04/05	(UCL S-F 2)		BT	
Sat 08	**Southampton (H)**			
Tue 11	West Bromwich Albion (A)			
Sat 15	Burnley (A)			
Sat 15	(FA Cup final)			
Sun 23	**Crystal Palace (H)**			
Sat 29	(UCL final)		BT	

All fixtures subject to change. *lost 5-4 on pens










THAT WAS THEN

A decade ago, on Saturday 25 September 2010, Liverpool drew 2-2 with Sunderland at Anfield and this was the moment when Dirk Kuyt was congratulated by Fernando Torres for scoring the opener. But all was not well both on and off the pitch, with the team in 15th place and fans protesting against the club's ownership. Twenty days later the club was bought by Fenway Sports Group. Ten years later LFC would be on top of the world.



NEIL MELLOR

Retaining the title is a huge ask but this Liverpool team can build further upon its success

Liverpool have proved over the last two seasons that a good start to a Premier League campaign can build momentum that leads to a title challenge.

Last year the Reds won their opening eight matches and were never caught en route to winning the league by 18 points. The season before, Jürgen Klopp's men won their first six games and narrowly missed out on the title after accumulating 97 points.

The momentum and confidence built in the opening weeks of those seasons shouldn't be underestimated, but the difference this time around is that Liverpool won't have their supporters at Anfield to help them due to the ongoing consequences of coronavirus.

It feels unthinkable to start a season with no supporters inside Anfield. For me, Liverpool fans make a huge difference to how the team performs. You don't go unbeaten at home in the league since April 2017 unless your supporters are playing a part.

Liverpool 3 Man City 1 last November is a perfect example of Anfield's influence. At nil-nil Man City's players were still moaning to the referee about an alleged handball in the Liverpool penalty area by Trent Alexander-Arnold when Fabinho smashed the ball into City's net. Anfield was rocking, City were reeling and seven minutes later Mo Salah made it 2-0.

In my opinion the Anfield atmosphere made a huge difference to the outcome of that game. Without the fans inside the ground Liverpool would not have gained the same momentum and confidence, while City's players wouldn't have felt the same frustration or felt their confidence drain.

By full-time Liverpool were nine points clear whereas a City win would have left the gap at three points. It was a hugely significant moment in the title race.

This season the Reds have to go to the Etihad first – in early November – and that gives Pep Guardiola's side an opportunity to strike a similar psychological blow. It also comes after a difficult set of opening fixtures for Liverpool.

Leeds will arrive at Anfield for the opening game high in confidence. I think they'll be a surprise package in the Premier League. Marcelo Bielsa has them playing a brand of football that means they'll be brave. They'll come to Anfield and have a go but will be more organised than Norwich were on day one last season.

Chelsea are Liverpool's first away opponents and while they've bought really well, it might not be a bad time to go to Stamford Bridge before they've built any real momentum. Then Arsenal come to Anfield and we've seen first-hand that their fortunes have changed under Mikel Arteta. It's not an easy start but if Liverpool win those three games it will give the players a huge amount of confidence going into October.

Over the last two seasons this group of Liverpool players have amassed 97 and 99 points respectively, and played some brilliant football. I expect Man City to remain our biggest rivals, with Chelsea having an outside chance if they acquire a proper goalkeeper, such as Jan Oblak.

For Liverpool to win the Premier League I think it will again take over 90 points and, as I said in last month's column, Klopp will need his key players to stay fit. It also has to be pointed out that only City have managed to retain the Premier League title during the last decade.

Whereas one team has tended to dominate other top leagues in Europe – Bayern Munich, PSG and Juventus, for example – the Premier League has had four different winners in the last five seasons.



Manchester United haven't been one of them, but they'll be looking to cut the 33 point gap to Liverpool, and while I think it will be too big an ask for Tottenham or Arsenal to challenge, it will be a really competitive league.

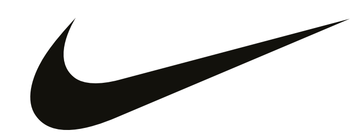
However, what I have seen from this Liverpool team is a group of players who can build on success. Winning the Champions League in 2019 was huge, but they built on that by winning the Premier League.

I expect their confidence to have grown further from becoming champions and having won big trophies they'll believe they can do it again, both in the Premier League and Champions League.

• Follow Neil on Twitter @NeilMellor33









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